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Jharkhand

Politics of Development and Identity

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Politics of Development and Identity

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Abbreviations

AIFB	All India Forward Bloc
AIJP	All India Jharkhand Party
AJSU	All Jharkhand Students' Union
BCKU	Bihar Colliery Kamgar Union
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	Bharatiya Jan Sangh
BLD	Bharatiya Lok Dal
BPHJ	Bihar Prant Hul Jharkhand
BSD	Birsa Sewa Dal
CDM	Community Development Movement
COJM	Committee on Jharkhand Matters
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI-ML	Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CSPJ	Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana Janata Party
DDP	Doordarshi Party
FBM	All India Forward Bloc (Marxist)
HJD	Hul Jharkhand
HYV	High Yielding Variety (of seeds)
ICJ	India Congress (J)
ICS	Indian Civil Service
INC	Indian National Congress (Congress Party)
INCI	Indian National Congress (Indira)
INCO	Indian National Congress (Organisation)
INCU	Indian National Congress (U)
IND	Independent (candidate in elections)
IPF	Indian People's Front
ITDP	Integrated Tribal Development Programme
JAAC	Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council
JCC	Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee

JD	Janata Dal
JHP	Jharkhand Party
JKD	Jana Kranti Dal (in the 1967 elections)
JKD	Jharkhand Dal (in the 1989 elections)
JMM	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
JNS	Jan Sangh
JP	Janata Party
JPJP	Janata Party (JP)
JPS	Janata Party (Secular)
LKD	Lok Dal
LKDB	Lok Dal (Bahuguna)
MADA	Modified Area Development Approach
MCC	Maoist Communist Centre
MCOR	Marxist Co-ordination Committee
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NWFP	North-west Frontier Province
PHJP	Progressive Hul Jharkhand Party
PSP	Praja Socialist Party
PWD	Public Works Department
RHJP	Rajya Hul Jharkhand Party
RJD	Rashtriya Janata Dal
SC	Scheduled Castes
SP	Socialist Party
SRC	States Reorganisation Commission (1953–55)
SSP	Samyukta Socialist Party
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SWA	Swatantra Party
TRIFED	Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation
TSP	Tribal Sub-Plan
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Preface

This is a study of the process by which the implementation of public policy influences the crystallisation of political identities premised on ethnic, linguistic, religious or other similar grounds. It argues that the failure of development policy to intervene in socio-economic conditions encourages societal groups to articulate themselves as political identities. The Jharkhand movement in south Bihar has been studied to substantiate the theoretical formulations.

After locating the tribal policy of the colonial and post-colonial Indian state in the dynamics of the colonial and nationalist discourses, the study briefly outlines the historical roots of the Jharkhand movement. It also focuses on the changing development profile of the Jharkhand region and correlates it with the fluctuating electoral support for Jharkhandi political formations. This correlation has been studied with the help of a Modified Resource Dependence Model (developed from Echeverri-Gent 1993). The model argues that both the State and societal groups control resources which are vital to the other. As the State in India controls a vast array of resources, disadvantaged societal groups articulate themselves as self-conscious ethnic identities in order to augment their political resources and influence the policy process in their own favour. The case of the Jharkhandi identity, and the movement around it, is one example of such articulation of a politically significant self-conscious identity in order to gain better bargaining power. The Jharkhandi identity was successful in influencing the State's response in terms of securing a development council for the area, in 1996. Later, as a result of a combination of factors such as identity assertion and political imperatives of the region, the objective of creating the state of Jharkhand was achieved.

The Jharkhandi identity, in turn, has been shaped by the response of the policy machinery to local needs and demands. This two-way interaction between the State and the Jharkhandi identity has also significantly altered the character of the identity itself. The 'politics of development and identity', thus born, has been discussed and changing approaches of the various political parties towards the Jharkhandi identity and its demand for autonomy have been analysed in this book.

Studying a politically dynamic and contemporary issue is one where even seasoned scholars tread carefully. Nevertheless, this study has delved into such an area, unmindful of the inherent difficulties. When the study was completed, the only political structure in Jharkhand was the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC), and even the Bill for the creation of the state had not been tabled in Parliament. Besides, the detailed socio-economic data for the 1991 census had not been published. However, much water has flown down the Damodar River in Jharkhand since then. While the copy-editing of the manuscript was in progress, the state of Jharkhand became a functioning reality. This ushered in an era of new political realignment in the newly formed state. The book has tried to take into account these new developments, as far as possible. However, many evolving political and development patterns have yet to play themselves out fully in Jharkhand. The perils of a dynamic research area include having to draw a line somewhere, else the book will never see the light of day.

While working on this manuscript, I have been fortunate to benefit from the kindness and assistance of many people. I am grateful to Dr David Taylor whose intellectual support was crucial in this exciting voyage of discovery. His incisive comments have played a crucial role in sharpening many of the formulations in this book. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr Sudipta Kaviraj who, despite his busy schedule, found time to offer valuable comments and suggestions. My interest in the processes of public policy was kindled by Professor Kuldeep Mathur to whom I am thankful for his continued encouragement.

I am grateful to the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, for encouraging my pursuit of public-policy analysis.

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I am thankful for the assistance and courtesy extended to me by the staff at the A. N. Sinha Institute, Patna; Bihar Institute of Rural Development, Ranchi; The Bihar Tribal Welfare Research Institute, Ranchi; British Library of Political and Economic Science, London; Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi; Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London; Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi; National Institute of Education Planning and Administration, New Delhi; Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi; Oriental and India Office Collection, The British Library, London; Parliament Library, New Delhi; School of Oriental and African Studies Library, London; Sri Krishna Institute of Administration Library, Ranchi; University of London Library, London, and Xavier Institute of Social Service Library, Ranchi.

During my field trip to Bihar, Uttam and his family kindly extended their hospitality at Patna. At Ranchi, Chachi, Ashishda, Alka Bhabi, Nupur and Prasoon did their utmost to help me. Shivaji was kind enough to act as my guide and companion to the remotest corner of the Jharkhand region, as was Ranapratap.

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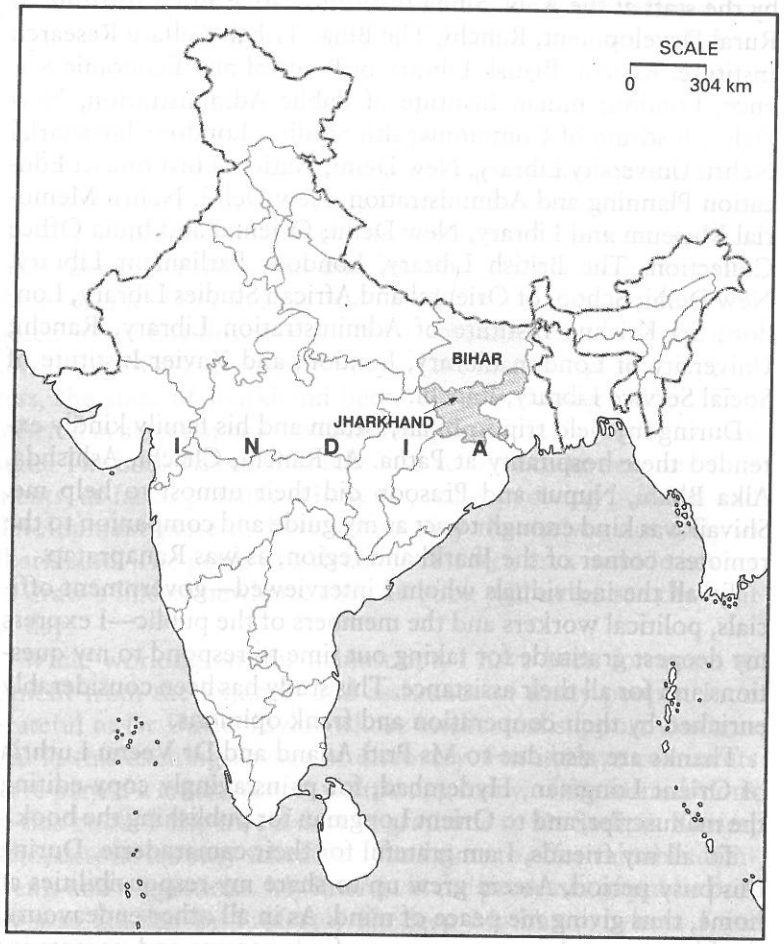

MAP 1: Location of Bihar and Jharkhand in India

MAP 2: Districts of Bihar and Jharkhand, 1996

MAP 3: Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar and Jharkhand. Based on Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1995).

1

Theoretical Concerns and the Problem

The contemporary world is witness to a wave of ethnic conflict, causing widespread misery and bloodshed. This phenomenon has been threatening the very existence of many States and has resulted in the emergence of new nation states based on ethnic lines. Such ethnic revival has also significantly altered the relationship between societal groups and the States in which they reside. Therefore, the issue of ethnicity has also emerged as a major issue in international politics. The growth in ethnic politics—both at national and international levels—has led to the demolition of the notion that with increasing modernisation and communication, more particularistic identities would eventually be eroded or would be submerged into national identities. In reality, "instead of abandoning their traditional ethnic identities in the quest for socio-economic and political equality", ethnic groups "have retained them along the way, even when they have made it to the top—ethnicity continues to be an important and meaningful source of identity for millions of people in the world" (Scott Jr. 1990: 148). Hence, political and socio-economic issues are being increasingly identified on 'ethnic' or 'ethno-religious' lines. Some instances of persistence of ethnicity or ethnic revival in the present-day world are Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, Muslims and Christians in Lebanon and the Philippines, Whites and Blacks in South Africa, Tamils and Sinhalas in Sri Lanka and multiple ethnic cleavages in eastern Europe and central Asia. The bases of ethnic solidarity may depend on a diverse number of factors ranging from cultural, linguistic and regional contiguity to religious, caste and historical similarity.

Ethnicity does not operate in circumstances that are independent of other identities. In a multi-ethnic country like India, indi-

viduals can and do have a number of identities that they don and doff, depending on the interaction to which they are exposed. As the term ethnic identity means differently to different individuals, it is imperative that the term is clearly defined. It is also important to distinguish between ethnicity and nationalism, since the two concepts are sometimes used interchangeably.

Ethnic Identity and National Identity

Broadly, in the modern world today there are two strands in the articulation of political identity. The first is an overarching identity which supports the State,[1] its policies and the status quo. This identity is more inclusive and seeks to subsume all other identities by employing a wide variety of methods such as co-option, coercion and incentives. This can be termed as national identity, defined as an overarching identity which claims precedence over all other identities.

The grass roots often throw up narrower, more ascriptive, particularistic and much more region-specific identities which can be referred to as subnational or ethnic identities.[2] These identities are not always and necessarily antagonistic to the overarching national identity and are often a part of the latter.[3] Subnational identities usually take two forms of articulation. They may crystallise into a national identity and seek political recognition (even as a sovereign State) or may end up as one of the many ethnic or subnational identities competing for control of resources in a multi-ethnic State. This does not necessarily imply that all national identities begin as ethnic identities.

Undoubtedly, these two identities—the national identity and the ethnic identity—are closely related and often overlap as in the case of nation states that are largely ethnically homogeneous. However, it would not be correct to hold that both kinds of identity articulation are the same.

Ethnic group and ethnic identity

An ethnic group may be defined as a "collective within a larger society that claims common ancestry, a shared past, and shared subjective identifications" (Nevitte and Kennedy 1986: 2). It is a historical entity whose members, in large part, conceive of themselves as being alike, by virtue of shared common features such as history, language, culture, stereotypes, territorial ancestry (real, fictitious or imagined), specific nomenclature or endogamy, and are regarded so by other such groups. However, none of these constitute indispensable differentiating ethnic features. Ethnic identities, on the other hand, are groups of individuals that perceive one or more of the above similarities as paramount in the self-definition of their individual identities and organise around it in order to acquire political resources. Such ethnic identities might be unstable, ad hoc, shifting, sometimes opportunistic and often related to political necessities and demands. Thus, the term ethnic group is a sociological category whereas ethnic identity refers to a politically relevant identity.

Besides, identities are either latent[4] or conscious. When an identity is latent, it serves merely a descriptive purpose. Such an identity is not, politically, very significant (for instance, man, woman, Indian, Scot, Hindu, and so on).[5] When an individual (or a group of individuals) consciously perceives a certain descriptive identity as indispensable to the definition of his/her (or their) personal identity and accepts that descriptive identity as predominant and paramount over other such descriptive identities and, further, seeks to acquire political resources on the basis of that identity, that conscious identity becomes politically significant.[6] Thus, a term that refers to an ethnic group may remain a descriptive category used to refer to certain individual(s) who are distinct on the basis of their ancestry, culture, stereotypes, and other such factors. Such an ethnic group, however, is not a politically self-conscious identity. When the individuals concerned translate this descriptive identity into a self-conscious political identity (by whatever process, premised on any attribute of the group), they emerge as an ethnic identity.[7] Thus, self-consciousness is a crucial factor in the articulation of an identity.[8] Self-consciousness is not inherent amongst members of an ethnic group. It is created by intellectuals from within the ethnic groups, who are deprived of desirable positions in society by the dominant ethnic group. Consequently, the frustrated intellectuals of a minority ethnic group may invoke common ethnicity as a political instrument (Smith 1971: 186–7). Any societal group that is not a self-conscious identity remains a sociological category and is not a politically relevant identity.

As far as the differentiation between an ethnic identity and a national identity is concerned, this is a much-contested issue. Various writers have attributed primacy to different factors.

Anthony Smith emphasises the idea of equal citizenship rights and vertical economic integration as factors that differentiate a nation from an ethnic group.[9] These, however, cannot be valid grounds for distinction. Direct membership with equal group-rights offered by a nation is not substantially different from similar rights offered by ethnic groups to its members. Further, the criterion of vertical economic integration is also flawed because there are federal nation states (as well as multi-ethnic nations) which exhibit varying degrees of vertical economic integration. Moreover, certain ethnic groups, despite a substantial degree of economic integration with other societal groups, nevertheless retain their ethnic character (Barth 1969: 9–11). In fact, often, ethnic groups are very conscious of their distinctiveness only because of their economic and trade-related interaction with other ethnic or societal groups.

Further, the emphasis on territoriality, by Smith, is also flawed.[10] No doubt, a sense of association with a territory—mythological, actual, symbolic or commemorative (Smith 1986: 28–9)—is important for an ethnic group to crystallise into an ethnic identity, but this sense of association is hardly the same as "territorial contiguity with free mobility". This phrase implies an actual physical association, which in turn is not as important as a sense of association. In fact, actual physical possession of a territory is not indispensable for either an ethnic identity or a national identity. Israel is a good example where the Jews were hardly in actual possession of the territory now called Israel, but that did not deter the process of national identity formation amongst them.[11] Moreover, a sense of association with the territory of Israel (often imaginary) plays a crucial role in the sustenance of the ethnic identities of Jewish communities in many European countries.

Moreover, none of the factors listed by Smith (1986)[12] are indispensable in the crystallisation of the ethnic group into an ethnic identity. An ethnic identity may utilise any number of such factors or invent new factors[13] to mobilise political support. Besides, nations, also, draw upon similar factors to forge a distinct identity. Thus, national identity and ethnic identity may

share certain common features, but this does not make them identical political concepts.

Further, the formulation that "in order to forge a 'nation' today, it is vital to create and crystallise ethnic components, the lack of which is likely to constitute a serious impediment in 'nation-building'" (Smith 1986: 17) is not unproblematic. This view implies that all nations emerge from ethnic components which 'crystallise' into national identities. However, in multi-ethnic nation states such as India, the ethnic components can hardly be said to have 'crystallised', but this has not proved to be an impediment in the emergence of a national identity. This can be substantiated by referring to a study by Walker Conner which points out that out of 132 States studied (many of which were nation states), only twelve were ethnically homogeneous, representing only 9.1 per cent of the total. Another twenty-five (18.9 per cent), had a single ethnic community comprising over 90 per cent of the population. On the other hand, in thirty-nine States (25 per cent) the largest ethnic group constituted less than half the total population, while fifty-three States (40.2 per cent) comprised more than five significant groups (quoted in Smith 1981: 9–10). Thus, crystallisation of ethnic components is not indispensable for 'nation-building'.

Admittedly, both nationalism and ethnicity share a number of common features, but ethnic identities are not the same as national identities. It cannot be denied that ethnic identities may, and often do, become national identities and that at different points of time, the same individuals may respond to different identities. However, this does not imply that all ethnic identities are ipso facto national identities. An ethnic identity may be translated into a national identity under a certain set of circumstances, but all ethnic identities are not necessarily potential national identities which often emerge as civic identities.

The two identities can also be differentiated in terms of the demands they make on the political process. Largely, national identities might be inclined to seek statehood, whereas ethnic identities might seek autonomy and adequate representation within an existing State. Of course, examples like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia exist where erstwhile ethnic identities did aspire for nationhood and statehood, but this is not the dominant phenomenon.

Another distinction may be made on the basis of sovereignty, although it is of limited use.[14] An ethnic identity that is articulated close to the point of time when it attains sovereign status (e.g., Pakistan) rapidly transforms itself into a broad-based civic national identity. If the same identity had failed in attaining sovereign status so rapidly, it would probably have remained as another competing ethnic identity.

Furthermore, we may attempt an analytical distinction between ethnicity-oriented nationalism and broad-based civic nationalism. In actual terms, such a distinction would be painfully difficult since all national identities, inevitably, contain a number of subnational identities. Such a distinction can be drawn only to underline the fact that some national identities depend upon ethnic identities to a greater degree than others, on account of the relative homogeneity of their populations. It is likely that a largely ethnically homogeneous nation would rely more heavily on the ethnic component to knit a coherent identity. On the other hand, an ethnically plural national identity (for instance, the Indian identity) would try to underplay the ethnic differences and focus on the non-ethnic similarities.

The process of conversion of cultural differences into bases for political mobilisation occurs only under specific circumstances. Ethnic identities are formed under a particular set of circumstances, and a number of factors like myths, symbols, perceived history, geographical identification, role of elite and many others play an important role in shaping these circumstances. Three propositions are central to the articulation of ethnic identities. First, ethnic identities are variable rather than given. They interact with their socio-political and economic context and are continuously in a state of flux which alters the nature of demands which these identities place on the political system. Second, the elite from the ethnic groups and their relationship of alliance or opposition vis-à-vis the State play a central role in the character and intensity of articulation. Finally, the process of ethnic identity formation may have important consequences for the very self-definition of the ethnic group in question and its ability to persist (Brass 1991: 14).

An ethnic identity is therefore "a subjectively self-conscious community that establishes criteria for inclusion and exclusion

from the group. This inclusion or exclusion from the group hence, involves explicit or tacit adoption of rules of endogamy or exogamy as well as a claim to status and recognition, either as a distinct group or as a group at least equal to other groups" (Brass 1991: 14). Thus, ethnicity emerges as "an alternate form of social organisation"[15] but is a contingent and mutable status that may or may not be articulated in a particular context or time. Further on, ethnic groups may tend to seek a major say in the political system in order to protect, preserve and promote their interests. This may lead to an ethnic group aspiring for a national status and/ or political recognition, either within an existing State or as a new State.

A nation state may be created either by the transformation of an ethnic group in a multi-ethnic State into a self-conscious political identity or by the formation of an inter-ethnic, composite and homogeneous civic national culture, through the agencies of a modern State. A nation is "a particular type of ethnic community politicised, with recognised group rights in the political system" (Brass 1991: 20).

In the multi-ethnic national identity of India, nationalism was articulated to counter a visible 'opposition', i.e., British colonial rule. This manifest opposition factor succeeded in creating an overarching national identity, which has been described in a clichéd phrase as 'unity in diversity'. However, the multi-ethnic context of the Indian national identity began emerging with the demand for Pakistan, which exposed the fact that an overarching political identity does not necessarily subsume or hinder other political identities. Throughout the nationalist struggle, the Indian national identity and other political identities (such as the one expressed in the articulation of the demand for Pakistan) had coexisted.

In modern times, most individuals have a number of identities that operate simultaneously. Under such circumstances, it is likely that an ethnic identity may be strongly articulated but remains a part of a larger national identity, as is the case in the Jharkhand region. In the independent Indian state, various ethnic identities have articulated themselves at different points of time in different ways. However, until the mid-1970s, these articulations were more like interest-group politics for a better share in the redistributive potential of the State. Since then, the ethnic groups started to assert themselves and have demanded anything

between more representation and complete autonomy. The bases of such articulation have been quite varied—from language to region, religion, culture and tribal heritage. However, due to the post-Independence Indian state's emphasis on development activities, most such identities have modified their bases of articulation to include the need for special development measures. Generally, therefore, such articulations have focused on the demand for greater political autonomy for efficient implementation of the development policy. The thrust of the nationalist State on development has been utilised by the newly articulated political identities to redefine their mode of political articulation. They have emphasised their ethnic features to demand a different approach to development, which in turn has meant a demand for more political and administrative autonomy and occasionally—at least rhetorically—complete independence.[16]

The resource capacity of the Indian state being limited, development policies tend to be target-group or region oriented. Not all regions and societal groups have been equal beneficiaries of the positive action of the State.[17] Consequently, a number of region-specific or culture-specific identities have been thrown up by the grass roots. These identities have, in some cases, been called ethnic identities and their demands are largely in the nature of demanding a greater share in the benefits resulting from the positive action of the State or demanding greater administrative autonomy.

Hence, the State and its policies, or the lack of them, play an important role in precipitating the articulation of ethnic identities. The argument of this study, therefore, is that public "policy implementation as the site of tangible exchanges between State and society provides a strategic point of developing the analysis" (Echeverri-Gent 1993: 4) of the role of the State in encouraging the crystallisation of ethnic identities.

Ethnicity and the State

In order to study the relationship between State and society in the process of ethnic identity formation, one must differentiate between three sets of struggles:

1. The struggle within the ethnic group itself, for control over its symbolic and material resources, which in turn involves

defining the group's boundaries and its rules of exclusion and inclusion.
2. The struggles between ethnic groups competing with one another for rights, privileges and available resources.
3. The struggle between the State and the groups that dominate it, on the one hand, and the population that inhabits its territory, on the other (Brass 1985: 1).

These three sets of struggles inevitably intersect each other, but it is possible to separate the three for analytical purposes to study the role of the State vis-à-vis a selected ethnic group. The State is always engaged in the differential distribution of resources among various categories in the population. The State is not merely a policy-producing mechanism that simply balances conflicting societal interests. Instead, the State tends to "support particular groups, to distribute privileges unequally, and to differentiate among various categories in the population" (Brass 1985: 9). Even when the State sets out to be "ostentatiously egalitarian", it must choose between types of "equalitarian" policies that invariably favour some groups or categories and discriminates against others (D. Ray, quoted in Brass 1985: 7). The State may also choose to stand neutral, but neutrality can also mean supporting the status quo.

Most modern States adopt policies of selective discrimination for a variety of reasons. Equalising policies such as "affirmative action" or "protective discrimination" are often seen as precipitating the formation of new identities amongst various categories of social groups. However, such policies do not precipitate identity articulation and mobilisation amongst all relevant categories of population, in the same way that not all sections of the population that face the adverse effects of unbalanced development, mobilise to assert a politically significant subnational or ethnic identity.

Thus, the study of public policy as a site of tangible interaction between State and society, can provide us with a valuable tool to interpret the processes by which public policy conditions the agency of societal groups, and in turn is conditioned by them.

In the Indian context, a 'politics of rationality' exists under which a bureaucratic policy planning, implementing and moni-

toring apparatus operates. However, the rational policy planning by a centralised bureaucracy and the process of implementation often operate in a skewed manner due to political considerations. Some scholars and planners argue for the insulation of the policy process from the political context to achieve an efficient policy implementation. Such opinions, however, fail to note that the political context serves some very important functions:

1. It provides an avenue for demand-making to the underprivileged societal groups who have no other avenue available to them for influencing the policy process.
2. It provides a valuable channel for societal groups to utilise their resources which are salient in the development scenario of India.
3. Last but not the least, the political process in principle serves an important democratic function by limiting the predatory influences of the State as well as dominant societal groups.

Thus, any study of the State-society relationship needs a model that has enough flexibility to account for the political context of development programmes. The Modified Resource Dependence Model is an attempt towards developing such a framework.

Modified Resource Dependence Model

The Modified Resource Dependence Model[18] attempts to examine the State-society relationship by analysing the dynamics of public policy as a tangible interaction between the State and society. The basic premise is that the State's (and the political regime's) paramount concern is survival. In order to further this objective, the State must acquire resources from its environment constituted of societal groups. Societal actors that control the relevant resource exert influence on the State and its policy activities. Such transactions between the State and societal groups constitute a relationship of mutual dependence. See figure 1.

The relative dependence of the State and the ethnic identity or societal group on one another is determined by the following factors: *(a)* importance of the resources controlled by the other; *(b)* concentration of and access to the resources; *(c)* uncertainty

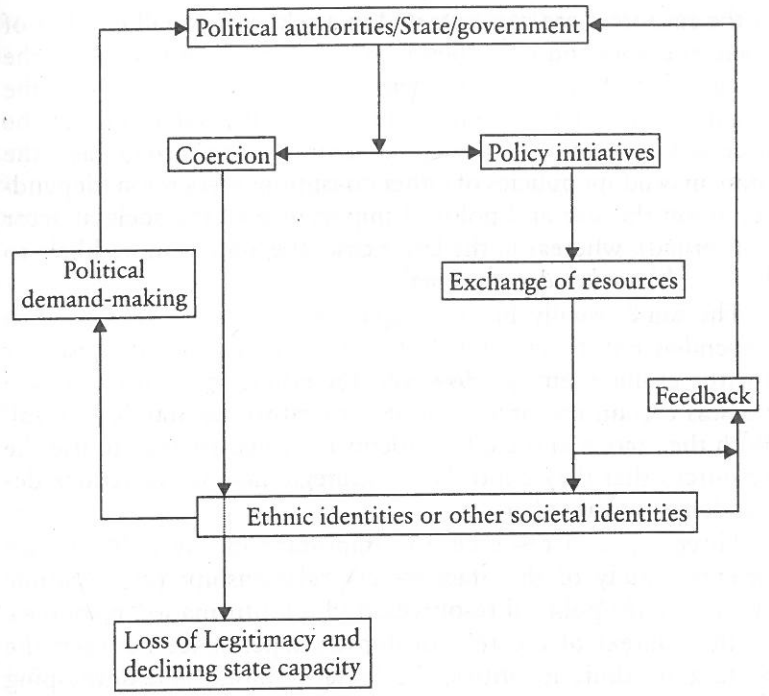

FIG. 1. Flow chart of the Modified Resource Dependence Model

of supply of the resources; and, *(d)* abundance of the resources (Echeverri-Gent 1993: 22–4).

Such factors do not constitute a relationship of dependence in itself. Dependence is a consequence of asymmetric exchange of resources. The importance of the resources controlled by the other goes a long way in determining the nature of the State-society relationship. If the resources controlled by the societal actors (ethnic and other similar politically relevant societal identities) is paramount to the survival of the State, the State tends to be accommodative and weak. On the other hand, if the State is able to control most of the resources crucial to the societal actors, it tends to become dictatorial and can usually implement its will over the societal actors.

The concentration, or dispersal, of the resources and their relative abundance (or scarcity) also plays an important part in determining the relative positions of the State and societal actors.

If the resources are concentrated in a relatively small number of societal actors and only they have access to such resources, the State-society relationship that emerges is quite different from the situation in which resources are widely dispersed and can be accessed by a number of societal actors. In the former case, the State may adopt policies of either co-option or coercion (depending upon the size and political importance of the societal actor concerned), whereas in the latter case, the State is more likely to be broad-based and consensual.

The State usually has the capability to counteract any such dependence if it can control other resources that are important for the ethnic identity. However, the ethnic identities may also possess certain resources that are crucial to the State's survival. Both the State and the ethnic identities, thus, attempt to use the resources that they control in a strategic manner to reduce dependence on the other.

Three types of resources are important in any public-policy oriented study of the State-society relationship: *(a)* economic resources, *(b)* political resources, and *(c)* information resources. In the context of the relationship of dependence between the State and ethnic identities, the State in India (and developing countries, in general) controls a vast array of goods and services crucial to the development and poverty alleviation of an ethnic identity or societal group concerned. The economic resources controlled by the State can determine the future development profile[19] of the region or ethnic identity concerned. If the State chooses to ignore any region or ethnic identity in its policy initiatives or calculations, it would dim the prospects of the societal group or region concerned. On the other hand, if a particular societal group or region is the target of the State's policy agenda, it is likely to prosper.

Ethnic groups can control a vast potential of economic resources in terms of locally available and already exploited resources and traditional technology. Societal actors also affect the State's control over economic resources by extending or withholding their cooperation in the exploitation of local natural resources.[20] In view of the limited resource capability of the Indian state, such resources being under the control of ethnic identities can be of crucial importance to the future development scenario of India. The proponents of community-based participative development

strategies have already recognised the potential of such resources. If the State is able to mobilise the economic resources controlled by the ethnic identities, it will lead to a better overall development profile and contribute to the legitimacy of the State. A failure to do so, will intensify the competition for resources that may result in weakened legitimacy of the State/regime and general political instability.

Political resources are also exchanged between the State and ethnic identities. These resources include the capacity of the State to exercise its authority, the legitimacy of the regime, and its capacity to mobilise political support. Ethnic identities need a share in the political resources controlled by the State to legitimise their own claims as well as to swing authoritative allocation of resources in their favour. Ethnic identities, on the other hand, control the resource of political support for the State and obedience to its authority, which in turn is crucial to the State for legitimising its own actions. In a scenario where large sections of the populace are unwilling to share the political resources that they control with the State, there emerges a situation when resorting to widespread coercion is the only avenue left to the State for its survival. This, in turn, undermines the political stability and legitimacy of the State.

The third important resource available to both the State and the ethnic groups is that of information. Both need to share this resource to further their respective aims. The State, by virtue of the vast economic resources at its command, is able to generate crucial and enormous amounts of information (e.g., flood and drought forecast, underground water availability, potential threats by natural catastrophes, scope of exploiting yet unexploited resources, and so on). Such information is crucial to the ethnic identities in more ways than one.

Ethnic identities, on their part, might possess information that could be crucial for the survival of the State. Examples of such information resources are: traditional methods of utilisation of locally available resources; availability of such resources; extent and levels of mobilisation in reaction to the State's actions and policies; feedback on policy initiatives; potential unrest and so forth. Such information enables the State to reorient its policies (or, probably frame new ones) and bring them closer to the target societal groups so as to contain social and political ferment.

Many resources available with the ethnic identities appear microscopic when compared to the huge resource capability of the Indian state. However, it is not the case, because the State also needs ethnic identities and other societal groups in the following manner.

Any State has two avenues available to it in order to enforce its will: coercion or policy initiatives. As the only actor having a monopoly over legitimate coercion (both physical and institutional), the State can very well resort to the same in order to implement its will in the face of societal and political challenges. However, the State cannot use force to contain dissent or conflict, indefinitely. This is so because the greater the use of coercion by the State to contain societal conflict, the lesser is the legitimacy of its authority and greater the reduction in its capacity to command obedience. Hence, in order to increase its legitimacy and rally a larger political support for the regime and its policies, the State uses policy initiatives to control a larger share of the resources, and thereby, ensures its survival.

These policy initiatives cannot succeed until and unless the ethnic identities and other societal groups are willing to share the resources they command. Consequently, ethnic identities make strategic use of the resources under their control to further their interests and demand a better policy initiative for themselves, from the State.

However, it is likely that a certain ethnic group is faced with a situation in which the State has not given it due political and economic space in its policy agenda. Under such circumstances, the ethnic group concerned may organise and mobilise on ethnic lines, to augment the political resource under its control.

Advantages of Modified Resource Dependence Model

The Modified Resource Dependence Model provides a valuable tool to analyse the relationship between State and societal groups. It facilitates the understanding of the dynamics of this relationship, by offering enough flexibility to include the operation of the political context, and enables the replacement of point-to-point comparisons or common-sense analysis with meaningful theoretical generalisations. This model is also useful in that it focuses on the two-way interaction between the State and societal groups. The process of identity articulation can be examined with the help of this model, since it takes into account the compulsion on the part of the State to try and evolve policy measures in response to the demands placed on it by the political system. A fine balance must exist between coercion and policy measures[21] for any meaningful exchange of resources between the State and the political identity. The dynamics of this balancing act by the State and societal groups concerned can be understood with the help of this model.

Since the strength of this model is its flexibility to include most kinds of political activity within its framework, it would enable the understanding and explanation of most cases of interaction between the State and societal groups. However, other cases will have to be examined in detail to categorically state the advantage of this model. It certainly enables us to understand the dynamics of public policy implementation and the articulation of Jharkhandi subnational identity over the past half-century in a coherent fashion.

Subnational Political Movements and Marginal Politics in India

The articulation of subnational identities in India is generally premised on linguistic, racial, ethnic, historical and geographical bases. Under the British colonial rule, "these local and regional identities were accorded a position of dignity by the nationalist leaders within the broad church of the anti-colonial struggle" (Mitra and Lewis 1996: 7). After the transfer of power into the hands of national leaders, the subnational imagined political communities[22] began to assert themselves in order to give concrete expression to their political aspirations. Apart from the cultural factors, "a feeling of deprivation, or neglect, resulting from the nature of national decision-making process ... provide the logic for mass movement in most cases". The feeling of neglect combines with the cultural factors to forge potent subnational political identities. The demands of these subnational identities range from greater autonomy to complete independence (Bezbaruah 1996: 175).

Cultural factors combined with development issues, and a feeling of alienation from the State and its policies, have led to the

articulation of subnational identities in many parts of India. The articulation of the subnational identity in the Gorkha regions of West Bengal combines the underdevelopment of the population in the region with the linguistic and cultural bases to demand political recognition (Das 1982). Similar patterns can also be noticed in other parts of India, for instance, the tribal autonomy and socio-religious movement amongst the Bhil, the Dang, the Dhodia, the Gamit, the Naik, the Kokna, the Warli and the Kathodi tribes in south Gujarat (Desai 1982; Lal 1982). Instances of subnational identity articulation can also be noticed amongst the eighty-three tribal groups in South India which include the Koya, the Malayali, the Irula and the Paniyan tribal groups. These subnational identity articulations draw upon cultural and historical factors and include socio-economic considerations born out of imbalances in the development process, as additional bases of mobilisation (Misra 1982).

Other examples of such subnational identity articulation in India are the cases of Khalistani[23] identity in Punjab and Kashmiri identity in Jammu and Kashmir, where religious and cultural factors have led to powerful expressions of identity. These subnational identities are demanding independence. As in other instances of subnational identity articulation in India, the socio-economic factors have also played a role in the articulation and character of these identities.

The fact that subnational identities in most parts of India draw upon socio-economic factors, in addition to their cultural bases of mobilisation, has led them to adopt a radical leftist idiom of politics in some regions, particularly in the tribal regions of West Bengal and Bihar, and in some parts of Andhra Pradesh. Such mobilisations have come to be known as 'Naxalite' politics that advocate radical action such as execution of 'exploiters' after trial in a 'people's courts', forcible harvest of fields alienated from the tribal peasants, and violent overthrowing of the existing administration (Duyker 1987; Adhikary and Bhattacharya 1982).

Amongst the many instances of such subnational assertions in India, the case of the Northeast is perhaps most significant due to the number as well as intensity of subnational assertions.[24] This region includes seven states—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura—and has an extra-

ordinary diversity of cultural identities. It contains 209 ethnic groups, and the "linguistic diversity of the area contributes to the complexity of the nationality problem in the region" where "420 languages and dialects are spoken". As the region is multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-religious, language often provides the criterion for the articulation of these subnational identities (Bezbaruah 1996: 172–3).

The articulation of subnational identities in the Northeast can be classified into three broad categories. The first category includes those types of conflicts that arise out of a concept of distinct and separate identity leading to a secessionist movement and the inevitable clash with the Indian state (Bezbaruah 1996: 173). Examples of this kind of subnational identity articulation in the Northeast are the Nagas,[25] some strands of the subnational movement in Manipur and Tripura, and the activities of the Mizo National Front (Bezbaruah 1996).

The second category of subnational movement in the Northeast is the demand of some groups for a distinct political identity, separate but within the broad framework of an existing Indian identity. Such subnational movements in the Northeast "are often professedly democratic, directed mostly against the central government who have the authority to bring in constitutional changes to give political recognition to sub-nationality aspiration" (Das 1982). However, the disruption of law and order leads to their clash with the state government as well. An instance of such a movement in the Northeast is the Bodoland movement.

The third strand of subnational identity articulation in the Northeast includes those groups that are not numerically dominant nor live in geographically compact areas but, nevertheless, are apprehensive of their identity being subsumed within the dominant political and cultural identity. Hence, they assert themselves to protect their culture.

The States Reorganisation Commission had recognised the difficulty in drawing boundaries around such a complex variety of cultural identities, and seemed to have envisaged the state of Assam as a culturally mixed unit which would include all the seven states. However, the pressure exerted by the articulation of the above subnational identities has led to the acceptance of the

principle of culturally-defined states in the region, although after much struggle and socio-economic conflict and, in some cases, long-drawn insurgency (Das 1982: 174). For instance, the Naga Nationalist Council led an insurgent movement between 1956 and 1966 leading to the creation of Nagaland. Similarly, the Mizo National Front led an armed rebellion from 1966 to 1986 when Mizoram was created as a separate state within the Indian Union. Similar examples can be found in all the states of the Northeast. Manipur has been witness to extremist activities since 1947, whereas in Tripura the tribal population has been fighting to preserve its identity. Similar concerns of identity has led to a long-drawn insurgent movement in Assam spearheaded by the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). After Assamese was declared the state language of Assam in 1960, the hill tribes of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hills fought for the creation of Meghalaya in 1971. However, the cultural complexity of the region ensures that socio-economic conflict and subnational assertion continues (Das 1982: 174–5).

Amongst the many instances of assertion of subnational identities in India, the case of the Jharkhand movement is unique in character. The movement draws upon the tribal cultural heritage of the Chota Nagpur region (Munda 1992) but has evolved to include the socio-economic problems of the region as one of the primary bases of the articulation of a subnational identity. This has led to a regional basis for political mobilisation in the Jharkhand movement. The dynamics of articulation of this subnational identity has been analysed in this study.

The Jharkhand Movement

The Jharkhand region, according to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) *(Election Manifesto of JMM, 1996* 1996: 3), consists of eighteen districts in (undivided) south Bihar,[26] three in West Bengal, four in Orissa and two in Madhya Pradesh. However, over the last half-century, through the avenue of political negotiation, the Jharkhand movement came to concentrate on the eighteen districts of (undivided) south Bihar (see chapter 7). These districts are Bokaro, Chatra, Deoghar, Dhanbad, Dumka, East Singhbhum, Garhwa, Giridih, Godda, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Kodarma, Lohardaga,

Pakur, Palamu, Ranchi, Sahebganj, and West Singhbhum. Jharkhandi political groups and parties until recently claimed that all the districts in the four states were within the geographical scope of their demands. However, the creation of the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC) in 1994—with its jurisdiction over only the eighteen districts of the Jharkhand region that lay in Bihar—and the softer tone of the Jharkhandi political groups about the other three states suggests that, politically, Jharkhand came to mean the districts in Bihar only (see map 2). Most of the geographical area and the majority of the population of Jharkhand lay in Bihar and, consequently, the Jharkhand movement has been most active in Bihar. There has been almost no significant movement for autonomy in the other three states. Hence, the districts that were part of Bihar are the focus of this study. This delimitation of the study has been upheld by the enactment of the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000, which provided for a separate state of Jharkhand, and the actual formation of the Jharkhand state (comprising only the eighteen districts of undivided south Bihar) in November 2000.

Since this study was carried out prior to the formation of the Jharkhand state, the socio-economic data for Bihar given in this book pertain to undivided Bihar and the data for Jharkhand pertain to the eighteen districts of undivided south Bihar that formed the Jharkhand region within Bihar. Based on the figures of the 1991 census, the eighteen districts of the Jharkhand region have a population of 21,848,860 living in an area of 79,732 sq. km. This represents 25.3 per cent of the total population and 45.85 per cent of the total land area of Bihar (see table 59). There are thirty notified tribes in the region with a total population of 6,044,010 (see table 60). More than 91 per cent of the total tribal population of Bihar lives in the Jharkhand region. Today, only about 25 per cent of the total population of this region is of tribal origin. Furthermore, the Scheduled Tribes (ST) are not evenly dispersed throughout the region. The districts of Dumka, East Singhbhum, Gumla, Palamu, Ranchi, Sahebganj and West Singhbhum account for 79.38 per cent of the total ST population of Jharkhand. Besides, within these districts also, the ST population is not evenly distributed. Hence, there are only small pockets of high tribal concentration. Consequently, no political movement

in Jharkhand can hope for success without the active cooperation of the non-tribal residents.

The total Scheduled Tribes population of the whole of Bihar is 6,616,914 and represents 27.66 per cent of the total population of Bihar (table 60). The tribal population of Bihar is divided into thirty different tribes. They "generally belong to the Proto-Australoid stock though traces of Mongoloid strain have also [been] found" (Sachchinanda 1972: 168). The main tribal groups are the Hos, the Santhals, the Oraons, the Mundas, the Asurs, Korwas, Birjhias, Chick Baraiks, Loharas, Karmalis, the Mahalis, the Bhumij Kols, the Cheros, the Kharias, Hill Kharias, Sauria Paharias and the Pahariyas (Prasad 1982: 34). "The tribals differ widely among themselves in level of socio-economic development. The number of people living entirely by hunting and food gathering is very small.... A few tribal communities [are] still devoted to shifting cultivation" (the main ones being the Asurs, Birjhias, Hill Kharias and Sauria Paharias). "The rest of the tribes who form 95% of the tribal population are settled agriculturists" (Sachchinanda 1972: 170).

The tribes in the Jharkhand region of Bihar have a number of languages, but most of them fall into either the Austric or the Dravidian families. None of them have a written script, though efforts have been made to develop one.[27] Tribal folklore has been communicated down the generations with the help of a strong oral tradition, but the written form is increasingly popular with the help of the Devanagari or the Roman scripts. The interaction between tribals and non-tribals has been widespread and, consequently, most tribals also speak Hindi and a variety of related dialects.

The subnational movement in Jharkhand is a good example where the ascriptive features of tribal heritage and culture have combined with the poor development profile of the region, to forge a politically significant ethnic identity. The movement began with the desire for the betterment of the tribal people and had a significant anti non-tribal component. However, the demographic reality of the region (only about a quarter of the total population today is of tribal origin; see chapters 4 and 5) forced the leaders to modify the rules of exclusion. Consequently, all people settled in the region came to be included within the de-

finition of a Jharkhandi. The poor performance of the development machinery in the region added to the tribal bases of mobilisation, and popular support for the movement grew. The Jharkhand movement has been demanding the creation of the state of Jharkhand within the Indian Union with all the federalist autonomous trappings of the Constitution. They were able to secure only a development council for the region called the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC) until the passage of the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000 by the Lok Sabha on 2 August 2000. The Bill has since become a law, and a separate state of Jharkhand carved out of the eighteen districts of south Bihar was inaugrated on 15 November 2000.

It is noteworthy that at the international level, some intellectuals and leaders of the Jharkhand movement have been projecting the Jharkhandi identity in terms of a tribal identity premised on a forest culture. They seek recognition of the rights of indigenous people in forums such as the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.[28] However, this component is strongly underplayed in the Jharkhandi identity projected within the region. In fact, since 1950, Jharkhandi leaders have been making great efforts to emphasise that a Jharkhandi is any person who resides in the region, irrespective of his/her tribal origins. The main reason for this is the political and demographic reality of the region where the tribal population is a declining minority.

The socio-economic condition of most tribals is poor, with low literacy rates and employment levels (see chapters 4 and 5). Most tribal agriculturists have been engaged in subsistence agriculture. Since the colonial period, therefore, there has been a tradition of seasonal economic migration of tribals as unskilled labourers to the tea gardens of Assam and to fields and construction projects in other parts of India. In the last few decades, growing industrialisation in the Jharkhand region has led them to unskilled jobs in the industries and mines of the region.

The Jharkhand movement is rooted in the poor socio-economic condition of the region and draws its political symbolism from tribal culture and tradition. The Jharkhandi leaders trace their struggle back to the tribal revolts of the nineteenth century, which were sparked off by the oppressive land revenue arrangements under the Permanent Settlement. Historically, the Jhar-

khand movement can be traced back to the last two decades of colonial rule in India, when socio-cultural organisations sought to bring about changes in the life of the Jharkhand region. The nationalist project of creating a community at the national level was repeated at a lower level in Jharkhand (as in many other parts of India). Just as the nationalists had used cultural factors to forge a national community, the leaders of the Adivasi Mahasabha (predecessor of the Jharkhand Party) tried to create a community in the Jharkhand region by throwing open its membership to all the residents of the region, irrespective of their *adivasi* (tribal) origins or otherwise. The tribal heritage of the region, and its symbolism, was construed to represent a geographical region instead of the social category of tribes. The ethnic identity that came into being was politically significant at the state as well as at the national level (see chapters 2, 3 and 7).

Furthermore, by the time of Independence, the Jharkhandi community thus created had already adopted the issue of poor development profile as a supplementary ground for popular mobilisation and was demanding an autonomous state of Jharkhand. In the integrationist-euphoric post-Partition period, the premise of an ethnic identity (tribal identity in the case of the Jharkhand region) would have sparked off fears of separatism and invited the State's repressive wrath. The 'secular' premise of poor development, under the system of exclusion during the colonial rule, would have found support across the political spectrum.

Consequently, since the 1950s, the leaders of the Jharkhand movement have increasingly emphasised the declining development profile of the region as grounds for demanding an autonomous state. Leftist input and influence into the movement in the 1960s again emphasised the primacy of economic factors, and played down the cultural facets (see chapter 3). The demographic profile of the region led to a political reality where the leaders could hardly afford to overplay the tribal-cultural attributes since it would have alienated non-tribal support. The emphasis on poor development in the region was also appropriated by the State. This, in turn, affected the character of the articulation of the demand by Jharkhandi societal and political groups. Over the past fifty years, this development premise has almost completely

displaced the cultural premise of the movement. As will emerge in the following chapters, the perpetually declining development profile of the region served to reinforce the primacy of economic factors as the basis for political mobilisation.

The Jharkhand movement suffered from perpetual divisiveness due to personality clashes and political ambition amongst its leaders primarily. Their inability to forge a politically significant front meant that they were unable to engage in any meaningful exchange of resources with the State. The political resources required by the State to generate legitimacy for the regime were dispersed over a large societal space. Furthermore, the political resources controlled by the Jharkhandi groups were not of primary importance to the State since a relatively small number of Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected from the region (out of the fifty-four parliamentary seats in Bihar, only fourteen are in the Jharkhand region). Consequently, Jharkhandi political groups came to play only a marginal role in the project of legitimisation of the Indian state. Their dependence on the political, information and economic resources controlled by the State was much larger than that of the State on them. The result, therefore, was that the Jharkhandi groups were unable to secure any meaningful exchange of resources. Faced with the political impotence of the Jharkhand political groups, the electorate began to experiment with other political parties, in the hope of securing better resource allocation by the State. The failure of the public policy machinery (see chapters 4 and 5) contributed to the fluidity of the situation.

Beginning with the 1962 elections, the Jharkhandi electorate began to strategically use the political resources under their control. They began to extend political patronage to national parties which had some hope of forming the national government and thereby had the capability of fulfilling their demands. At the state level, electoral support was extended to a regional party that could influence actual policy implementation (see chapter 6).

However, this strategic sharing of political resources yielded limited results. The electorate realised that if they were able to disrupt the State's control over the economic resources of the region (mineral wealth),[29] they might be able to pressurise the State to take cognisance of their demands. They could then uti-

lise the political resources at their command to influence the public policy agenda. Consequently, apart from a strategic use of political resources, the population of the Jharkhand region also extended its support to the agitational politics of the Jharkhandi groups. This involved a blockade of mineral transportation from the region in the late 1980s and 1990s which had a twofold effect. On the one hand, it challenged the State's control over the economic resources of the region and, on the other, it threatened to undermine the legitimacy of the State. The mineral wealth of the region is indispensable for the State, in order to avoid societal conflict and preserve legitimacy of the regime in the rest of the country. Consequently, a threat to the State's control over the economic resources of the region made it more receptive to the political demands of the Jharkhandi political groups.

Such agitational politics of the Jharkhandi groups was met by a degree of coercion by the State. This, in turn, undermined the legitimacy of the State since it reflected its inability to resolve conflict without resort to violence. A dual strategy of agitational politics and shifting political patronage thus yielded better results. The State became eager to respond to the demands of the Jharkhandi groups with policy measures, and a more meaningful exchange of political and economic resources followed. The result, eventually, was the creation of the JAAC, followed by the passage of the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000 and creation of a state from the Jharkhand region of Bihar. The process of creation of the JAAC is elucidated, explained and analysed in the chapters that follow.

The tribal regions in India came under the integrationist thrust with the expansion and growth of the colonial enterprise. The economic potential or strategic importance of some of the tribal regions necessitated active direct administration by the colonial state. However, the unsettled political situation that emerged after the tribal revolts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was hardly conducive to active economic enterprise. This, along with the 'civilising mission' of the colonial state, was the reason behind the emergence of a special system of administration in the tribal areas which came to be called the Excluded Areas. The main features of the system of exclusion are analysed in chapter 2. Moreover, since the colonial discourse had significantly affected

nationalist discourse, some proclaimed goals of the colonial state were adopted by the nationalist discourse. Consequently, the independent Indian state went on to adopt the integrationist theme of the colonial state, especially with regard to the tribal regions. These issues have also been addressed in chapter 2 in order to demonstrate the continuity of the colonial discourse into the post-colonial period.

Chapter 3 endeavours to locate the movement in its politico-economic context and documents its trajectory over the last half-century. The effort in this chapter is to highlight the fluidity of the Jharkhand movement in order to understand the patterns in its growth.

The Jharkhand movement has conditioned the State's policy response and has, in turn, been conditioned by it. The exchange of resources between the governmental machinery and the Jharkhandi groups has affected the course of both the public policy agenda in the region as well as the nature of political demand-making by the Jharkhandi political groups. Popular support for different political parties has been quite fluid and has responded to the performance of the public policy implementation machinery. Within the framework of the Modified Resource Dependence Model, an attempt has been made to analyse the shifts in the electoral support for the various political parties in Jharkhand. It has been noticed that popular support has been shifting between political parties depending upon their capacity and promise to deliver better policy response. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the dynamics of the changing development profile of the Jharkhand region. The effort in these chapters is to isolate patterns and trends in the development profile of Jharkhand in relation to Bihar as a whole. The trends and patterns thus isolated have been correlated to the electoral support for Jharkhandi political groups in chapter 6. It has been noticed that the decline in the development profile has significantly affected the electoral support for Jharkhandi as well as other political parties.

The demand of autonomy for Jharkhand has been present ever since Independence. By the 1970s, development issues had come to occupy the centre stage of political dynamics of the Jharkhand region. Faced with the ever-declining development profile, the issue of autonomy started to gradually find greater political sup-

port by the late 1970s and early 1980s. This demand for autonomy has changed character over the years, while the nature of political articulation around the demand for administrative autonomy has also been quite fluid. Various political groups have offered different options to the electorate. The dynamics of the demand for autonomy and its political context have been examined in chapter 7. Conclusions have been summed in chapter 8.

Methodological Note

A wide variety of sources have been utilised in the collection of material for this study. Apart from secondary works, the data used have been taken from government sources including censuses, plan documents, statistical diaries, reports of the reviews of development programmes and district gazetteers. As the work covers the period 1951–91, the dependence on government data is inevitable. There is no other source which provides consistent and comparable data over such a long period of time, as the volume of work required in collection and collation of such detailed data is beyond the capability of any agency other than the government.

Keeping in mind the probable unreliability of governmental data, it must be pointed out that the patterns that emerge in the study are too stark to be affected by small errors in the available data. It must also be noted that the patterns of change which emerge in the analysis of the development profile of Jharkhand region in this study have been confirmed by the reports of the various committees[30] appointed to report on the state of development, and by the information gathered during my field trip.

Moreover, as government agencies are the only ones that generate this vast amount of data, it would be politically and administratively simpler for the government to alter the definition of the relevant category to hide its inefficiency than tamper with the collected data. This exercise of altering the categories can be noticed in the constant redefinition of the category of "workers" since the 1951 census (this issue has been dealt with in greater detail in chapters 4 and 5, while discussing the employment profile of the Jharkhand region).

As far as the development profile of the Jharkhand region is concerned, an analysis of any unit of India smaller than a state is

a difficult task because very little data is available at the sub-state and district levels. This is particularly true of the data related to the allocation of development funds. The centralisation of the development planning process in India has led to a situation in which financial allocations are made on the basis of development heads such as, agricultural activities, irrigation, and so on. This sectoral allocation has not been published for any area smaller than a state. Hence, in the case of Jharkhand, details of financial allocation are unavailable. The only exception is the financial allocation for the Tribal Sub-Plan that is earmarked exclusively for the tribal areas (all the tribal area of Bihar lies within the Jharkhand region).

It must be noted that allocation of funds or expenditure does not necessarily mean that all the funds have been used for the betterment of the target population or region. The JMM leadership alleges that only 4 to 6 per cent of the allocation is actually spent on development activities within the Jharkhand. A government official in an interview during the field trip confirmed this point of view. He privately estimated that only 4 to 10 per cent was all that was actually spent.[31] The main reason for this is corruption, leakage of resources,[32] and transaction costs, as well as the inability of the development infrastructure to utilise the ever-increasing allocations. As will emerge in later chapters, a number of committees appointed to review development policies have expressed their displeasure over this state of affairs.

Given the enormous mismatch, in Jharkhand, between amounts allocated and that spent, the decadal patterns of change in the developmental indicators[33] have been analysed to gauge the effectiveness of public policy. For instance, instead of the amount of money allocated or spent on literacy projects, the actual changes in literacy rates have been taken as an indicator of the development profile. Additionally, it can be argued with a substantial degree of accuracy that it is better to analyse the effects that a certain policy has had in changing the living standards of the population, rather than to do an analysis of financial allocation and expenditures.

The Jharkhandi leadership and populace alleged during the field research that Jharkhand has emerged as an internal colony of Bihar and that there exists a north Bihar versus south Bihar

divide, as far as development activities are concerned. Hence, apart from calculating the development indicators in percentage terms for the Jharkhand region and for Bihar as a whole, the percentage share that the Jharkhand region represents in Bihar as a whole has also been calculated. This has been called 'Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar'. The Jharkhand total for every indicator has been calculated by adding the figures for all the districts of the Jharkhand region. Therefore,

$$\text{Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar} = \frac{\text{Jharkhand total}}{\text{Bihar total}} \times 100$$

Thus, the data used in the study reflects the actual changes in the development profile of the Jharkhand region and, also, the changes in the development profile of Jharkhand *in relation to* the development profile of the state of Bihar as a whole.

The Field Study

Perhaps the most enlightening and enjoyable aspect of this research was the field study during 1995–96. After a few months of library work at Delhi, fieldwork in the Jharkhand region was conducted in two phases during January and May 1996. The focus of the field research, apart from collecting available data from relevant institutions,[34] was on trying to meet and interview as many relevant persons as possible. In the process, the study was fortunate to benefit from interviews with many important political actors in the region across the political spectrum as well as from the opinions of a cross section of general population in both urban areas as well as rural areas of the Jharkhand region. The purpose of interviewing was to elicit the views of political actors and the general population in order to gain first-hand insight into the dynamics of development policy and the politics of identity in the region. It has also enabled the utilisation of other material in a more accurate fashion.

The interviews were not framed with the objective of using them as a representative sample in the study due to the fact that practical constraints precluded large-scale sampling. Since random sampling was not possible,[35] a stratified sample was taken with a combination of snowballing and purposive methods. Purposive sampling was done to ensure that all important political

players in the Jharkhand region (such as the MP from Ranchi, Jharkhandi activists, office-bearers of the JAAC, local office-bearers of the Indian National Congress (INC), the Janata Dal (JD) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the officials of the development bureaucracy) were included in the sample. The respondents were stratified into three strata: government officials, political activists, and general population. The interviews with the respondents were conducted with the help of an open-ended interview schedule and the responses were recorded with the help of a tape recorder which were later transcribed for use in the study.

In Patna, the purpose of the visit was to try and secure some statistical data. Hence, a senior civil servant was approached in the Directorate of Statistics and Evaluation, who was interviewed. He proposed the names of two of his colleagues in the planning department who agreed to be interviewed. A director in the planning department gave part of his interview off the record during which he provided invaluable insights into the process of statistics tabulation in Bihar and gave reasons for the unavailability of comparable data over the years. He explained that complete data at the district level, if published, would seriously threaten the stability and legitimacy of the government of Bihar, as it would lay bare the enormous degree of inefficiency on the part of the administration in charge of development.

In the Jharkhand region, the focus was on Ranchi where the regional development commissioner (officer in charge of all development activity in the Jharkhand region and a long-serving career bureaucrat) was approached. After being interviewed, he suggested three other officers with experience of development administration in Jharkhand. The secretary to the JAAC, another senior officer, was also approached and interviewed.

With regard to the political actors in Jharkhand, local offices of various political parties were identified and efforts were made to interview the senior-most office-bearer. At the JMM central office, Ranchi, only two office-bearers could be interviewed. They were members of the working committee of the JMM, and one of them was also a member of the executive committee. At the INC office, the district head and two other members of the District Congress Committee were interviewed. At the Janata

Dal office, only interviews with JD candidates for the assembly and parliamentary elections could be managed. The BJP MP from Ranchi was also interviewed in his office. Other members of the BJP refused to be interviewed, as they asserted that their MP had said everything that they may have wanted to say. Efforts were also made to interview JMM MPs from the region. Shibu Soren remained elusive until the end, while Suraj Mandal flatly refused to be interviewed by a "scholar or researcher".

As far as the Jharkhand region was concerned, thirty-seven interviews with the general public were collected in urban areas such as Ranchi, Chaibasa, Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur and Dumka. While visiting these places, the first person available was approached who in most cases agreed to be interviewed. After the interview, he or she was requested to suggest the most politically active person of the locality in an attempt to locate local political actors. In this way, eleven local political actors were interviewed.

After sampling in the urban areas, the rural interior was criss-crossed on a scooter in an attempt to reach the most far-flung places in the Jharkhand region. In every hamlet that passed, the exercise of approaching the first person available was repeated in order to interview the public as well as the local leaders. Apart from West Singhbhum and the extreme south and north of the Jharkhand region, most places were covered in the sampling exercise. In the process, forty-two members of the public and seven local village political activists were interviewed in the rural areas.

While crossing block headquarters, efforts were also made to locate the local development actors. This effort was not always successful, as very often these persons were unavailable for days together. However, three block development officers and four heads of local panchayats were interviewed.

The sampling in the region was skewed in favour of males as the women were rarely willing to be interviewed. Only seven women in the urban areas and six women in the rural areas could be interviewed. Unfortunately, no women political workers were available for interview.

The sample thus collected cannot claim to be representative of the population but it served the purpose of providing valuable first-hand insight into the operation of the process of development as well as the dynamics of the politics of identity.

Notes

1. In this study, State (with an upper case) has been used to refer to the political concept of a State and to the collection of institutional and discursive structures that comprise a State. For all other uses of the term state, such as the states (provinces) of India or for reference to the Indian or colonial state, state (with lower case) has been used.
2. These subnational identities may be articulated due to a variety of reasons. For example, some subnational identities may be articulated to seek greater political recognition, whereas others may be articulated to skew the authoritative allocation of resources in favour of particular societal groups. Still other subnational identities may be articulated due to a combination of factors.
3. Ethnic or subnational identities, by definition, are not always in conflict with the national identity, although sometimes they may compete with the latter for political recognition or control over resources.
4. Identities may be latent in the sense that although they may be seen as a distinct sociological category by outside observers, they are not self-conscious political identities.
5. Each of these terms is a descriptive term to refer to the relevant individual. However, any of these terms has the potential to become a politically relevant identity. For instance, the term woman may be used to distinguish between genders and remain a descriptive term. However, during the last few decades it has also acquired a certain degree of political currency and has emerged as a politically relevant identity. Similarly, the term Hindu pertains to individuals belonging to a religious group in Indian society. However, the mobilisation of a large numbers of persons on the grounds of Hindutva in recent years by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has led to its emergence as a politically significant identity.
6. There may or may not be a clash between two or more identities of an individual or a group of individuals.
7. A good example of such an articulation is the case of Muslim French citizens whose ancestors had migrated to France from North Africa. Some of these people, despite being French citizens and having been born and brought up in France, recently came to see their Islamic identity as paramount which subsumed their French identity (or, for that matter, North African/Arab identity). At that point of time, their religious identity, which until now was merely a descriptive identity, started acquiring ethnic status.
8. Walker Conner is of the view that "an ethnic group may be readily discerned by the outside observer, but, until the members are themselves aware of the group's uniqueness, it is merely an ethnic group and not a nation" (Conner 1973: 3). Conner (1977) also uses the terms 'ethno-nationalism' and 'nationalism' interchangeably with the

implication that ethnicity and nationalism are similar, politically relevant identities.

9. Smith's formulation (1971: 186–7) may be summarised as follows:

Cultural differentiation	+	Territorial contiguity with free mobility	+	Common kinship network	=	Tribe
Cultural differentiation	+	Territorial contiguity with free mobility	+	A relative large scale	+	
External political relation of conflict and alliance with similar groups	+	Considerable group sentiment	=	Ethnic group (Identity)		
Ethnic group	+	Direct membership with equal group rights	+	Vertical economic integration	=	Nation

10. "Territorial contiguity with free mobility" has been emphasised for the emergence of an ethnic identity (Smith 1971).
11. Also noteworthy is the fact that the territory imagined by the Jewish community—an important premise in their identity articulation before the creation of Israel—was significantly different from the geographical boundaries of the present Israeli state. This substantiates the argument that a sense of association is of greater relevance in identity articulation than the actual possession of the territory concerned.
12. Smith lists the following factors that are important for an ethnic group to emerge as an ethnic identity: (a) collective name; (b) common myth of descent; (c) shared history—actual or perceived; (d) distinctive culture; (e) association with a specific territory—sacred, commemorative or actual; and (f) sense of solidarity, at least amongst the elite (Smith 1986: 28–30).
13. For instance, the declining development profile of the Jharkhand region and the resultant alienation has been an additional factor in political mobilisation by the Jharkhandi identity, premised primarily on tribal heritage and culture.
14. The formulation that "when a 'mini-nationalism' wins independence, it is transformed into a full-blown "nationalism" is relevant in some circumstances. Once an ethnic identity attains independence, it becomes a macro-nationalism which attempts to exert "nationalism on a wider political, economic, cultural, religious or ethnic grounds" (Snyder 1984: xv, xvii).
15. Ethnicity is an alternative to being subsumed by the mainstream social organisation.
16. For instance, the case of Khalistan and Nagaland.

17. It is not being implied that the State has attempted to promote balanced development in all parts of the country. And lack of resources is the least important factor in this.
18. Echeverri-Gent (1993) developed the Resource Dependence Model to study the State-society relationship. The Modified Resource Dependence Model draws upon this model to analyse the relationship between ethnic identities and the State.
19. This study defines development as an improvement in the living standards of the population (see chapter 4) and, therefore, the term 'development profile' has been used to refer to the patterns emerging from an analysis of all the indicators of development for a region at any given point of time. For instance, the development profile of Jharkhand in 1951 refers to the broad patterns of development that emerge from an analysis of the development indicators such as infant mortality, public health, employment levels, educational levels, and so on, available for that year. Besides, the analysis also takes account of the potential for economic growth reflected in indicators such as changes in irrigation potential and land under major crops and the changes in the pattern since the last available comparable data.
20. For instance, the lack of cooperation of the Jharkhandi population in exploiting the mineral resources of the region was expressed in the economic blockades during the 1980s and 1990s.
21. The balance between coercion and policy initiatives would depend on the numerical size of the societal group concerned, the political importance of the resources that it controls, as well as the intensity of political mobilisation amongst its members.
22. Identities are imagined in the sense of being adopted by those who see themselves as marginalised by the State.
23. For a good analysis of the dynamics of subnational identity formation amongst Sikhs in Punjab see Fox (1985).
24. See Das (1989) for a full discussion of the dynamics of subnational politics in Northeast India.
25. For a discussion of subnational identity articulation amongst the Nagas, see Das (1982).
26. There has been a continuous reorganisation of districts in Bihar, ostensibly to improve development administration. The original five districts of Chota Nagpur division have been divided and redivided resulting in eighteen districts by 1996.
27. In October 1997, in a conversation with Ram Dayal Munda (vice-chancellor of Ranchi University) at the School of Oriental and African Studies, (SOAS), London, it emerged that there are numerous proposals for a new script for the various tribal languages. Munda indicated that due to the multiplicity of languages in the Jharkhand

region and numerous contending proposals for the script, it is likely that the Devanagari script would be adopted. The main reason would be to facilitate communication between the tribal languages as well as with the Hindi-speaking population.

28. Conversation with Ram Dayal Munda in October 1997 at SOAS, London.
29. The Jharkhand region accounts for 48 per cent of coal, 48 per cent of bauxite, 45 per cent of mica, 90 per cent of apatite and all the kyanite produced in India. Moreover, "almost every kind of mineral including gold and atomic minerals, is found in this region" (Das 1992b: 402).
30. The conclusions of the relevant committees have been discussed in chapters 4 and 5.
31. Interview with the regional development commissioner at Ranchi in January 1996.
32. A classic case of leakage of funds due to corruption is what has come to be known as the 'Animal Husbandry Scam' in Bihar, in which Rs. 950 crores (9,500 million) were siphoned off from governmental revenues, ostensibly for maintenance of non-existent cattle and poultry. The former chief minister of Bihar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, a number of other officials and former ministers are facing criminal proceedings over the matter.
33. Development indicators analysed include the pattern of employment, agricultural produce, irrigation potential, area under principal crops, educational standards of workers, availability of agricultural finances, infant mortality, birth and death birth rates, causes of death, revenue collection, and so on.
34. Documents were collected from A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Sciences, Patna; Bihar Institute of Rural Development, Ranchi; the Bihar Tribal Welfare Research Institute, Ranchi; Sri Krishna Institute of Administration Library, Ranchi, and Xavier Institute of Social Service Library, Ranchi, during the field trip to Bihar.
35. The time and resources available made it impossible to interview 10 per cent (the minimum sampling required for a true random sample) of the population of the region.

2

*Tribal Areas of Bihar in Independent India: A Legacy of Colonial Discourse?**

During the British rule, the tribal population of India was, by and large, concentrated in four major areas—Northeastern parts of the country (erstwhile province of Assam), the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), the western tribal region (in the Bombay Presidency, i.e., south Gujarat and western Madhya Pradesh) and the eastern tribal belt (in the province of Bengal and later that of Bihar and Orissa). The British could not ignore the tribal areas due to their strategic and economic importance. The tribal population in NWFP and Assam gained some attention from the colonial administrators on account of their frontier location. Control over these areas was essential for effective strategic defence of the Indian empire. The eastern tribal belt was also important to the colonial state because of its mineral wealth. The requirements of raw materials for emerging industries ensured that this region occupied an important place in the British colonial project.

The necessity of maintaining peace and order in the frontier provinces prompted the British administrators to develop a system of exclusion that to some extent incorporated the traditional tribal elite. The inaccessibility of these frontier regions, combined with the relatively low levels of economic returns from them, precluded the necessity of active direct rule. As long as the frontiers of British India could be effectively defended, the colonial

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state was willing to allow a degree of autonomy to the tribes in these regions.

Contrary to the case of NWFP, the eastern tribal belt did not have the same strategic importance, but its long-established mineral wealth made the region significant to the colonial state. Effective utilisation of the economic resources in this region required a far greater degree of direct rule. Consequently, in these regions a system of exclusion developed which did not allow for any significant role of the tribal elite. The system of exclusion in this region was premised on direct paternalistic rule by the governor of the province through district officers.

The colonial policy of exclusion of tribal areas operated within the larger colonial discourse. This policy carried within itself the twin ideas of protection and the 'civilising effects' of British rule. It was this model of exclusion that went on to significantly influence the tribal policy of later years as well as that of the independent Indian state. This chapter seeks to analyse the colonial discourse and locate the policy of exclusion within it, with the aim of unravelling the continuities and discontinuities of this policy in independent India.

The argument in this chapter is that the rationalist-integrationist paradigm of the dominant colonial discourse was carried into the administrative arrangements of post-colonial India. The colonial discourse was rationalist in the sense that it drew upon the theories of the Enlightenment to generate legitimacy for the colonial state, and sought to organise administrative structures according to a rationally organised Weberian model of bureaucracy.[1] The post-colonial Indian state is a rationalist state in the sense that it continued the colonial state's emphasis on a rationally organised Weberian bureaucracy. Moreover, the Indian state seeks to further its twin goals of development and integration with the help of a bureaucratic planning and delivery mechanism. The centralised development planning presupposes that a certain policy must 'rationally' work in all contexts and ignores the political and cultural factors.

The Idea of Discourse and Hegemony

The view that a body of ideas generates and sustains the power and legitimacy of State structures has been seen to have its intel-

lectual roots in the writings of Antonio Gramsci (Gramsci 1971: 44–120) and in his concept of the hegemonic power of an ideology. Gramsci's conception of the State as "coercion plus hegemony" led to a well-established intellectual tradition that explores the relationship between ideological structures and power. "Ideology operates as discourse, addressing or, as Althusser puts it, interpreting human beings as subjects" (Therborn 1980: 15). There are many strands to this area of enquiry. In the "Althusserian tradition, emphasis was laid, first on the science/ideology demarcation, then on ideology 'in general' and the operation of 'ideological state apparatuses'" (: 31). The creation and organisation of ideological hegemony was examined by neo-Gramscian scholars, while the Weberian strand of thought dwelt on the 'crisis of legitimation' in the social order. Marxist scholars studied the operation of political discourses in terms of the contradiction between material base and ideological superstructure (: 31–2).

The study of hegemonic power of an ideology in colonial and post-colonial cases showed that colonial states had been successful in exercising hegemony over the population of the colonising country as well as the colonised people.[2] This stream of enquiry into the relationship between ideas and State power in colonial states has been called 'colonial discourse analysis' or 'colonial discourse theory'. It is this strand of the study of hegemony which is relevant to this study. It can be seen to originate in Edward Said's powerful writings. "It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that Edward Said's *Orientalism* ... single-handedly inaugurates a new area of enquiry" (Williams and Chrisman 1993: 5)—that of colonial discourse. Said's later book, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), also expanded the boundaries of colonial discourse theory to include the analysis of the linkages between culture and imperialism.[3]

Said's work focused mainly on the variety of textual forms in which the West produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control. Recent works in colonial discourse theory, however, have tended to use a local rather than a global focus and have drawn from a wide variety of intellectual traditions. For instance, "psychoanalysis (Homi Bhabha) ... deconstruction (Gayatri

Chakravorty Spivak), feminism (Chandra Mohanty), other forms of Marxism (Aijaz Ahmad)" (Williams and Chrisman 1993: 5), and political psychology (Ashis Nandy).

Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* was an important landmark in the acceptance of this area of enquiry as a formally recognised area of study but was "preceded by a German intellectual tradition which shared Said's concerns with the historical and theoretical relations between the Western economic/political global domination and Western intellectual production". For instance, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School, Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt (Arendt 1973). Subsequently, Michel Foucault's work (1970) on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries examined the construction of "man and his others" as objects of knowledge within this overall period, with the implication that an ideological continuity exists into the twentieth century.

Arendt combined political, cultural and sociological theory with empirical investigation and offered what can be termed as "an eclectic and singularly Heideggerian-informed left-leaning cultural materialism", and in her analysis, "aesthetic culture and philosophical idealism emerge as crucial components of imperialism's political self-legitimation" (Williams and Chrisman 1993: 7).

This intellectual heritage has led to a number of avenues of enquiry. The dynamics of 'hegemonic consensus' that emerged in India in the nineteenth century is the strand that is crucial to this study. The debate about the relationship between ideology and power in the Indian context was conducted within the "ambit of Marxist theory, but more specifically within the relations between culture and politics suggested in the writings of Antonio Gramsci". It has linked up with the Marxist approach to the 'national and colonial question', and "recent European discussions on Gramsci have highlighted the importance of his ideas not merely in the context of revolutionary politics of Europe, but for problems such as the national and colonial questions or the nature of the post-colonial state in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America" (Chatterjee 1986: 29).

Gramsci's idea of the State as 'coercion plus hegemony', and of struggle for power as domination plus intellectual-moral leadership has enabled

> Indian critics to examine afresh the so-called 'renaissance' in 19th century India in terms of the aspiration of a new class to assert its intellectual-moral leadership over a modernising Indian nation and to stake its claim to power in opposition to its colonial masters. But the examination also demonstrated how, under the specific conditions of the economy and polity of a colonial country, this domination necessarily rests on extremely fragile foundations and the intellectual-moral leadership of the dominant classes over the new nation remains fragmented. (Chatterjee 1986: 29)

This study makes use of the above discussed stream of colonial discourse theory to examine the operation of the dominant strand of colonial discourse in India and the emergence of a nationalist and, later, a subnational discourse (Ibid.: 21–22).

Colonial Discourse and the Nationalists

In order to understand the continuities between the tribal policy of the colonial state and that of the independent Indian state, it is important to understand how the nationalist discourse borrowed significant elements of the colonial discourse. Nationalist discourse in India emerged, first, as a reaction and, later, as an alternative to the colonial discourse.

The British colonial state in India was not only a set of institutions and structures but also a set of discourses. The success of these discourses was essential for the legitimisation of colonial rule in the socio-political context, so as to generate political stability. The colonial state was inextricably dependent on a set of discursive structures premised on the discourse of Enlightenment. Both the functionaries as well as the critics of the colonial state believed that it drew its power from the "grand theories of European rationalism – its theories, self-definitions, narratives, delusions and strategies . . . [which it used] to define and describe itself, to negotiate and bring under control the alien social world" it had entered (Kaviraj 1994: 21). Those who had to deal with this colonial state, whether in a collaborative or oppositional manner, recognised and respected the indivisibility and importance of the myth of invincibility of Western rationality which was fundamental to understanding its institutions and logic of functioning. Therefore, while some tried to acquire Western

education in order to master the powers of the invincible European rationalist knowledge, others tried to adopt and adapt the ideals of English Utilitarianism into the figures of traditional Indian mythology. Still others tried to avoid it completely by turning towards the traditional discourse (: 21–2).

In general, however, the reaction against colonial discourse was muted because the colonial state adopted multiple levels of dialogue. It had to address three kinds of audience—British public opinion, Indian western-educated intelligentsia and middle class, and the masses of India. With each of these, it adopted a different kind of language while always employing the concepts of rationalist discourse. When addressing British public opinion, the colonial state used the language of reasonableness; that of education and legislation in its dealings with the Indian intelligentsia and the indigenous middle class; and that of force and power with respect to the large and distant masses of India. The language of discourse which the colonial state employed with the middle class and Indian intelligentsia was most significant in generating and maintaining political hegemony in India. It generated a new kind of discourse which at once consolidated the power of the colonial state as well as undermined it in the years to come.[4]

The colonial discourse was a rationalist discourse in the sense that it drew upon the theories of the Enlightenment to generate legitimacy for the colonial state and sought to organise administrative structures according to a Weberian model of bureaucracy.

The colonial state's projects of legislation and education led the Indian intelligentsia to view the colonial state—in contrast to the pre-colonial state—as one that defended the rule of law, gave security to life and property, and provided an opportunity to acquire knowledge of European arts and sciences. Furthermore, the vision of political future as projected by the colonial state was even more attractive to these intellectuals. The colonial state promised to fulfil their cherished ideals of democratic and constitutional governance, accompanied by modern industrial development. Minor concessions in the form of a series of Council of India Acts encouraged the Indian intelligentsia to believe in the colonial state. "In their conception, England which held out the ideals of parliamentary democracy, civil liberties and modern economic development, would act as the instruments for their

dispensation to other countries of the world. England was a 'mirror of their own future'". Therefore, British rule was "welcomed as the chosen instrument'" to change the despotic conditions of pre-colonial India into a bourgeois-democratic system (Panikkar 1995: 22). Notwithstanding the sharp criticisms of the colonial rule which were put forward by the intellectuals of the time, the belief that the transformation of India would occur within the colonial framework was clear. This belief had its roots in the false consciousness created by the ideologies disseminated by the colonial rulers and adopted by the intellectuals of the time.

Some intellectuals accepted a version of essentialism. A collaborative relationship developed amongst the rulers and the colonised people in which the latter accepted the world view, apparatus of knowledge, criteria of judgement and ideology of the former. One strand of this discourse was particularly important in reinforcing this relationship, as it suited the hegemonic consensus. This view accepted the separateness of Indian history in spiritual and cultural matters but sought to retain British control over economic and political questions, since in the latter the superiority of British rationality was evident.

Apart from generating legitimacy for the colonial state, hegemonic consensus also went on to produce unintended and opposite results in the longer run. "By integrating society, introducing symmetric trends of social hierarchy, enumerating society, familiarising Indians with the theory of public power and democracy, placing before them the universality of reason and the great narratives of European nation-formation and introducing the skills of forming associations, this imperial discourse had also taught the Indians how rationalism could be turned against colonisers themselves" (Kaviraj 1994: 44).

Some Indian intellectuals, while employing Western rationalist tools, began to put forward an alternative historical narration that contested universalist imperial history. Thus, the nationalist view of history began by creating a dichotomy between the material and the spiritual domains, as opposed to the dichotomy of public and private spheres offered by the colonial state. "Anti-colonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its battle with the imperial power. It does this by dividing the world of social institutions

and practises into two domains—the material and the spiritual" (Chatterjee 1994: 6). In the opinion of the nationalists, in the material domain of economy, statecraft, technology and science, the West had proved its superiority and this superiority had to be acknowledged, studied and replicated.[5] However, the greater the success in adopting and imitating the material imperialist domain, the greater was the need to preserve the distinctness of the cultural domain, as the essentials of identity existed there.

This was perhaps fundamental to the trajectory of nationalism in India. It was reflected in the social reform efforts of the twentieth century when the necessity of change in the social and cultural domain was acknowledged, but intervention by the colonial state in the guise of legislation was sought to be excluded.[6] It was within this domain that nationalists contested the imperialist history of India with a history of their own which, although it used the universality of rationality as a tool, endeavoured to construct a modern national culture that was not Western. The 'imagined community' of the nation came into being in this domain where it was already sovereign. The major areas where this transformation of a colonised culture into a nationalist culture took place were those of language, literature, drama, art, nationalist educational institutions, family and religion. Indian nationalism started by asserting its autonomy and sovereignty in these areas and constructing the 'Indian' identity with its historical, cultural and symbolic appendages.

In the domain of the material, nationalism was unable to emphasise the difference, as it was able to in the spiritual and cultural domains.[7] Therefore, it began to assert itself in the public domain constituted by the modern/colonial state. The main task of nationalism was to challenge colonial hegemony over the middle class, i.e., to contest the 'rule of difference'. The growth of institutions in the country required that the 'rule of difference' be also institutionalised.[8] Nationalism, utilising rationalist thought and humanism that it had learnt from the colonists, contested this difference between the rulers and the ruled. Consequently, it became a force in the public domain as well. The public area occupied by nationalism expanded as nationalist politics grew stronger.

The nationalists thus created a dichotomy between the material and the spiritual/cultural domains (nationalism having de-

clared sovereignty in the latter realm). The rationalist colonial state, on the other hand, created and recognised the distinction of public and private domains, whereby it sought to ensure equality of all private domains (in terms of religion, caste, and so on). The nationalist discourse operated in a set of contradictory domains. On the one hand, in the cultural domain it was able to construct a new discourse that was premised on the difference from the colonial discourse and, on the other hand, it accepted and revered the colonial model in the realm of the material.

Therefore, to some extent, parts of the public domain of the colonial state and the material domain of nationalism overlapped. Nationalist thought was not successful in constructing an alternate discourse in the material domain (partly because the nationalist leaders were convinced of the superiority of the Western rationalist discourse within the material domain). Consequently, it also accepted the colonial model of economic and political development consisting of politico-economic and social integration and industrialisation.

The acceptance of the essentials of the material domain of the colonial discourse by nationalists had an important impact on the administrative and discursive structures of the post-colonial state in India. In the subsequent discussion, it will emerge that there was a strong continuity of colonial discourse in the Constituent Assembly and, hence, in the Constitution.

Colonial Policy and the Tribal Areas of Bihar

British colonial discourse, since the earliest Orientalist versus Anglicist debates, had two distinct strands. Both viewed European cultural practices as superior to Indian and gave primacy to British power, but they differed over the future of Indian society. One strand, which was to become the dominant model, viewed the future in a Macaulayan trajectory in which European theory and practice was to lead the way towards an integrated and centralised Indian polity which would promote free trade within a global market. The other strand of British discourse saw the future of India as retaining its differences under a benevolent British suzerainty in alliance with the 'natural' leaders of the country (the native princes and rulers or the dominant caste/tribal groups).

In the context of the tribal regions, the two strands of colonial discourse were played out between the missionaries in which some (such as the Evangelicals) viewed all Indian practices as 'corrupt and backward' and sought their replacement by the 'superior' European practices. The other strand wished to work with what they saw as the 'grains' of Indian society, such as the caste structure. Nonetheless, both the points of view concurred on the history of tribal society and viewed it as victim of the Hindu caste system and assigned a pivotal role to British rule. Under British rule, the future of tribal society was seen as either completing its transition to a market economy or enjoying an ahistorical future of rustic happiness.[9]

Within the broad framework of colonial discourse, ethnographers, anthropologists, sociologists, historians, administrators and Christian missionaries actively investigated the tribal cultures of India from which emerged two broad approaches towards the tribal areas. The first conceptual framework, which became the dominant model, was developed by the British administrator-ethnographer-anthropologist. This model treated tribal communities as "isolates, tribals as Noble Savages, and the primitive condition was described as a state of Arcadian simplicity.... These scholars overlooked the operation of the historical processes that led to the formation of the state, the emergence of a complex regional system in the wake of the migration of non-tribal communities and functional castes and the penetration of cultural influences.... This led to the build-up of a myth that has bedevilled all historical writings ... and inspired all tribal movements" (Singh 1985: 1). Thus, a tribal was viewed as a person who was innocent of the operation of the socio-historical processes and therefore open to being duped by non-tribals and moneylenders. This perspective served the purpose of justifying the continued presence of not only the Raj but also of missionaries.

The second point of view saw tribes as members of a subsystem of Hinduism in the process of being absorbed into Hindu society.[10] Both these points of view, despite their obvious difference in approach, viewed tribal communities as waiting to be absorbed into the mainstream political and economic system—either the market economy or the Hindu caste system.

The central premise of the dominant strand of colonial discourse was that until the time when tribal communities were

integrated into the dominant politico-social systems, they required a great degree of protection. This formed the basis of the broad colonial policy towards the tribal areas. Once the structures of the colonial state were in place, the state had the ability to choose between direct intervention and a judicious veto (maintaining a policy of non-intervention but intervening occasionally to enforce or disallow certain actions which were important to the colonial enterprise). This capacity to exercise a veto was also central to the tribal policy of the colonial discourse.

The colonial state realised its inability to intervene in the spiritual/cultural domain of the tribals, as this area did not allow for rationalist reduction. The colonial state was content to control the economic life of the region by emphasising what was now broadly accepted by the intelligentsia of India: that the rationalist discourse was superior in the material domain and therefore worthy of emulation. Tribal regions were portrayed as primitive and backward, and to bring them into the mainstream of material rationalist discourse was seen as desirable. The colonial state, therefore, gradually adopted a policy of exclusion whereby the rationalist discourse would be furthered in the material domain by maintaining control with the help of a judicious veto. The rationalist dichotomy of public versus private domains was invoked to guarantee the inviolability of the spiritual domain, in the form of laws that guaranteed tribes the right to practise their customs and traditions.

The policy of exclusion excluded the operation of ordinary law of British India in areas declared to be Excluded Areas. The responsibility of administration in these areas lay with the governor of the province in which such areas lay and not the elected government (elected under Government of India Acts 1919 and 1935), and the financial allocations for these areas were not subject to voting in the legislatures. This formed the part of the judicious veto of the colonial state. Such veto was exercised by the governors (for example extending certain provisions of certain acts/laws to the excluded areas) to promote, preserve and protect the colonial economic enterprise in such areas, e.g. mining in Chota Nagpur. This exercise of judicious veto (from the point of view of the governors and the colonial state) in order to extend the material domain was geared towards furthering the economic

enterprise of the colonial state and generating legitimacy for the colonial state in these areas, as was the case in other parts of the country.

The concept of *protecting* the tribal communities from the adverse effects of too rapid an integration into the economy and polity was born out of the nature of British rule in India. Unlike elsewhere in the world where traditional leaders played an important role as intermediaries between the colonial administration and tribal communities, a system of direct rule (with varying degrees of active direct rule) evolved in India. This direct rule was integrationist in character whereby some of the tribal areas were incorporated into the general administration of the British provinces or the Indian princely states. At the same time, in other pockets of tribal concentration, a system of exclusion was developed where the concept of protection of the tribal population gradually evolved. The main features of this system of exclusion were:

1. Paternalistic rule by district officers;
2. exclusion of tribal areas from the operation of ordinary laws to preserve their ethos, laws, practices, and so on, with its logical corollary of simple and/or different procedures to settle disputes and limitation of the jurisdiction of ordinary courts;
3. restricted entry of non-tribals into tribal areas; and,
4. strengthening of tribal leadership.

The tribal revolts and rebellions that occurred as a result of the gradual implementation of direct rule during the nineteenth century, in turn, reinforced the policy of direct rule. The necessity of establishing convenient lines of communication to facilitate administration and rapid deployment of the army in cases of rebellion, was soon followed by cantonments, traders and a faster pace of urbanisation. Moreover, the operation of this policy of direct rule led to higher rates of in-migration of non-tribals into the region. Consequently, the tribal areas were integrated into the new economic and administrative set-up which ended the relative isolation of the tribes and their political dominance in the region.

In the tribal regions of Bihar (as in many other parts of the country), the use of military force formed the basis of early colo-

nial policy. It was followed by legislation incorporating the fundamentals of the colonial discourse, as an avenue to legitimise its power in the region. In the tribal areas which came to be called the Excluded Areas under the British rule, colonial intervention began by the organisation of structures aimed at maximisation of rent. It confined itself to the material domain. The colonial state utilised the military force it had at its disposal to create material structures aimed at a greater intervention in the economic life of the region.

In this initial phase, the colonial state was still expanding, and efforts at legitimisation of the regime were not of primary importance. The earliest available instance of significant British activity in south Bihar was a militia force under Captain Camac in 1769 sent to subjugate the local chiefs and landlords. This step was taken to ensure regular payments of revenue by local tribal chiefs. From then until almost the middle of the next century, British activity in this area was limited to occasional military operations. These operations were aimed at subjugating recalcitrant local chiefs, tribal heads, landlords and revenue intermediaries, and to aid the collection of overdue revenue and war booty. This policy was geared towards maximisation of revenue without incurring the cost of a local administration. The introduction of rent collection on contract by local chiefs, *thikedars*, *ilakedars* and landlords, on behalf of the British, brought about a fundamental change in the agrarian relations of tribal south Bihar.

It was only after the Kol insurrection of 1831–32 and the Santhal rebellion of 1855 that the contradictions in such a policy (of maximisation of rent from land through the intermediaries) were noticed. Although the erstwhile officers[11] would like us to believe that the local rent collectors were responsible for the numerous tribal revolts and insurrections in the late eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries, the British administration cannot escape responsibility since it was their efforts at maximisation of revenue that passed down the line until it became unbearable for the tribal peasant of south Bihar.

The tribal revolts of the mid-nineteenth century signified that the policy of minimum administration with maximum rent collection had outlived its utility. If British rule was to benefit from this mineral-rich region, the use of force was not sufficient—

colonial discourse had to now legitimise British intervention. The hegemonic discourse of British rule was already emerging in the rest of India, in the shape of projects of legislation and education. The tribal areas were to become a part of the larger colonial discourse after the rebellion by the tribes had been crushed by sheer military superiority. It was at this point of time that the colonial discourse on tribal areas was articulated in a nascent form.

Gradually, a regular administration and police force were established in the area. A number of laws were enacted such as the Wilkinson Rules, Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act and others, incorporating the fundamentals of the colonial discourse. As already pointed out, the colonial discourse carried within it the concept of protection that was now implemented vis-à-vis the tribal population. Hence, colonial intervention in the region was justified by the colonial discourse on the grounds that it offered protection to the local population from two dangers—namely, the loss of agricultural land (owned by the tribals) to 'more civilised sections of the population' and the 'wiles of the moneylender'. Consequently, a policy of protection and exclusion was adopted towards these areas since colonial discourse portrayed tribals as 'primitive people, who were simple, unsophisticated and frequently improvident'.

For this purpose, initially, a number of individual laws were enacted and enforced in various parts of British India, including tribal Bihar. The Scheduled Districts Act 1874 was the first enactment to treat tribal areas as a separate category. This enactment empowered the executive branch of the government to extend any enactment in force in any part of British India to a 'Scheduled District' with such modifications as might be considered necessary, and by implication, excluded the 'scheduled areas' from the operation of any ordinary law of British India. This concept of protecting tribes by excluding them from the operation of ordinary laws was an integral part of the colonial discourse and continued in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and the subsequent Government of India Act 1919.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report contained a brief reference to such areas and suggested that the political reforms being contemplated for the rest of British territories in India could not be applied to the scheduled areas because "there was no *political*

material on which to found political institutions" (emphasis added) (*Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms* 1918: para. 199). Hence, the typically backward tracts were excluded from the scope of reformed legislatures in the provinces of British India.

The Government of India Act 1919 introduced a new element in the administration of these areas. It divided the 'Backward Tracts' into two types: the first included those areas that were considered so backward that they were completely excluded from the scope of the reformed legislatures and the constitutional reforms.[12] With respect to these areas, neither the Central nor the provincial legislatures were given any powers. The Governor-General-in-Council was the sole legislator for such areas and the elected ministers had no responsibility for them. The proposals for expenditures in these areas were not subject to approval by the legislatures, and no questions could be asked or discussions entered into about such areas.

The second type of 'Backward Areas' were those in which the reserved half of the diarchical government exercised the powers of extending or restraining any provincial law or enactment. Such areas were represented in the legislatures, but the representation was neither adequate nor effective.[13] The protectionist strand of the colonial discourse had evolved to ensure that the governor operating through the district administration was the sole arbitrator in the tribal regions. The use of education to ensure a wider social base for the colonial discourse (and to generate sympathetic support for it in the minds of emerging middle-class Indian intelligentsia) generated legitimacy for this system of exclusion.

After Independence, the Constituent Assembly adopted not only the basic structure of government but also some fundamentals of the colonial discourse. Due to the nationalist belief in the desirability of Western rationality in the realm of the material, the Constituent Assembly tried to implement an integrationist policy with a development model premised on industrialisation and a rationally organised bureaucracy as the delivery mechanism for public policy. In some ways, the protectionist strand of the colonial discourse also survived in post-Independence India. No doubt, significant new ground was broken when the Constituent Assembly sought to remove the 'rule of difference' and granted full political status to the tribal population. However, with re-

gard to other matters, the paternalistic and integrationist discourse vis-à-vis the tribal population continued.

Creation of an Autonomous 'Subnational' Community and Colonial Policy

The nationalist project had begun with an autonomous form of imagination of the community in the spiritual/cultural domain which was not amenable to rationalist reductionism. The nation was first imagined in this domain and declared sovereign. "The result is that autonomous forms of imagination of the community were, and continue to be, overwhelmed and swamped by the history of the postcolonial state. Here lies the root of our postcolonial misery: not in our inability to think out new forms of the modern community but in our surrender to the old forms of the modern state. If the nation is an imagined community and if nations must also take the form of states, then our theoretical language must allow us to talk about community and the state at the same time" (Chatterjee 1994: 11).

The Jharkhandi community like numerous other communities premised on various cultural lines (for instance, the Oriya identity premised on a distinctive language) employed the autonomous method of imagination of community that the nationalists had used vis-à-vis the colonial state. The leaders in the tribal areas of Bihar, who were also western-educated, were quick to learn from the nationalist leaders. They employed a version of local history, glorified the tribal revolts and utilised the uniqueness of tribal heritage to engender a process of such autonomous forms of imagination of the community that soon started to desire political recognition. Proto-Jharkhandi identity was articulated in the early 1930s in a memorandum to the Simon Commission. Consequently, by 1947 the tribal regions—supported by the protection of their cultural life under the system of exclusion—had acquired an 'imagined community' premised on tribal uniqueness and culture. It was helped by the fact that the Jharkhand region was on the fringes of both British colonial administration (in terms of it being an Excluded Area) as well as the nationalist discourse.

The 'subnational' communities employed the same avenues which the nationalists had employed vis-à-vis British colonial

rule to invent and declare their political identity in the spiritual/cultural realm. Once such a community was created, it began to seek political recognition from, first, the colonial state and, then, the post-colonial Indian state.[14] These 'subnational' or 'regional' identities also shared with the nationalists a belief in rapid development premised on the rationalist model. Consequently, the community thus created employed the poor performance of the development policy of the Indian state as an additional reason to demand political autonomy.

Simon Commission: Continuation of Colonial Discourse

During the colonial period, the discourse of paternalism, protectionism and integration in the tribal regions of India, especially in Bihar, was able to secure almost a consensus on the tribal policy. This is evident in the lack of dissent in the reports and debates of the period (elements of this also continued into the post-colonial period). The colonial project of legitimisation, through legislation, continued with the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission (Simon Commission) in 1928. The Commission which considered wide-ranging constitutional powers for the provinces, chose not to include the tribal areas in the new arrangements. Perhaps, the relatively poor growth of education in the region and the large-scale presence of missionaries had some bearing on this decision. Unlike the rest of India, the colonial state was not able to generate the same degree of legitimacy in the region since the educated middle class was still very small in number. The superiority of the colonial rationalist discourse, at least in the material domain, could not, therefore, be stressed upon. As will emerge in the following discussion, the missionaries as well as some proportion of the local populace portrayed the tribal regions as 'requiring civilising influence'.

To add to the persistence of the hegemony of the colonial discourse with respect to the region, the relatively low place of the tribal question on the nationalist agenda did not help matters. Although individual leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Thakkar Bapa were alive to the tribal population and their problems, the Indian National Congress (INC) as an organisation was surprisingly unconcerned.[15] Moreover, the broad acceptance of the

colonial discourse with respect to the material domain by the nationalist leadership also implied accepting the desirability of greater social and economic integration of the tribal population.

In its report, the Simon Commission took notice of the "Backward Tribes" and commented that if Burma was excluded, "they ['backward' tribes] are to be found in five of the eight provinces, and the total extent of the backward tracts in these five provinces is no less than 120,000 square miles, containing a population of 11¼ millions" (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 2: 127). It further on pointed out that "the province of Bihar and Orissa, ... is the *most artificial unit* of all the Indian provinces. It was formed by bringing under a single administration three areas which differ markedly, not only in physical features, but in many racial, linguistic, and cultural characteristics" (emphasis added) (: 87). Notwithstanding these observations, the report of the Simon Commission did not lead to any significant change in the policy orientation towards the tribal areas.

When the report of this commission was being discussed in the House of Commons, the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (as the "Backward Areas" came to be called in the Simon Commission Report) were conspicuous by the brevity of reference to them. While introducing the bill, the then Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare, in dealing with the subject of special responsibilities, made a brief reference to these areas: "Again, with the backward districts and aboriginal tribes, ... every hon. member will agree that we must keep in reserve powers to prevent these tribes and these remote districts from being exploited" (*Parliament Debates* 1935, 296: 53). The colonial discourse is quite clear in this excerpt in its language of reasonableness. In line with the strength of the colonial discourse, there was no dissent. The members of the House of Commons agreed with the Secretary of States's point of view. There was no further debate or discussion on the issue except for a brief reference by Wing Commander James who while referring to the Excluded Areas observed: "I welcome the proposals ... [which] appear to be a great improvement". He wanted the government to clearly demarcate the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas. Referring to such areas, he observed that "more than mere powers kept in reserve are required.... The trouble is that they [reform and

demarcation of the Excluded Areas] have always been left for further consideration.... What I should like to hear from Secretary of State, if possible, is how and when he proposes that the survey, ... be carried out because I hope the inquiry is going to be independent, unfettered ..." (: 307–11). The protectionist element of the colonial discourse, which the nationalist leadership also agreed with by default (since they did not have opinions that opposed it), was thus mirrored in the House of Commons. In accordance with the accepted rationalist colonial discourse and its corollary of protectionist administration in the tribal areas, the House of Commons whole-heartedly supported the continuance of the system of exclusion.

The underlying discourse of the Simon Commission is evident in its report which quoted from the Memorandum on Backward Tracts prepared by the Bihar and Orissa government (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 12: 332), in order to emphasise the need for special provisions and special protection for the aboriginal population:

> They cannot compete against the subtler minds of the Aryan races that have in the past two or three centuries penetrated slowly into the country; their improvidence lays them open to the wiles of the moneylender; their lack of education and their distinctive languages place them at a great disadvantage in the Courts. When roused to action by real or fancied grievances their tribal organisation, where it survives, and elsewhere the solidarity of kinship make for a rapid spread of disaffection, while their childlike outlook makes the duty of restoring order a peculiarly distasteful one. (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 1: 88)

Evidently, the colonial officials saw ample justification for the continuance of the protectionist policy in the tribal region. Furthermore, the official view of a tribal hardly seemed to have evolved since the late nineteenth century. The tribals were still viewed as a race inferior to the 'relatively more civilised Aryan races', without a sense of history or understanding of the results of their actions and were prone to revolts on imagined grounds. The Commission took note of the 1855 Santhal rebellion and observed that it was marked by "looting and violence" and "a large punitive force was required to restore order. After the rebellion, the district was excluded from the operation of the

general regulations" (Ibid.). The distinctive cultural features of tribals, such as language and social organisation, were portrayed as being in need of the civilising influence of the rationalist paternalistic administration.

The Simon Commission, referring to the tribal population in its report, observed that

> these backward races are commonly supposed to be *remnants* of pre-Aryan autochthonous people into whose strongholds in the hills and forests the invader found it difficult and unprofitable to penetrate. Some of them live by hunting, and by a type of shifting cultivation.... In the valley, the tribes have with great labour terraced isolated fields, producing abundant crops, but at no time before the establishment of British rule were these plots coveted by the plainsman, *for he could not have collected rent from the occupiers*. But the moneylender and the trader took advantage *of the new reign of law to reduce the aboriginal owners to practical serfdom* (emphasis added). (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* (1930, 1: 88)

This statement demonstrates the entrenched and dominant colonial discourse in the approach of the Commission towards the tribal population. It considered tribals to be 'remnants' of some pre-historic people, the implication being that these remnants should have 'Aryanised' by now, but somehow—historically—it did not work out that way. Therefore, unless the tribals were 'civilised' under the paternal British rule, they would be perceptually in need of protection. The Commission saw the tribals as wild people who spent their time hunting and emulating the 'more civilised' people by trying some agriculture in terraced fields. Further, the 'civilised Aryans' had no use for such people. It was only after some agriculture developed ('civilising effect') under the British rule that these areas became attractive to the outsiders ('more civilised people'). The Commission had implicit belief in the goodness of the colonial administration and saw no difficulty with the facts that money economy came into that area with British rule and that the same money economy was making the tribal population dependent on the moneylenders. However, the dominant colonial discourse was performing its function of allowing awkward realities to be subsumed as exceptions or anomalies, and this was not seen as incongruous.

The colonial discourse continued when the Commission observed that in

> the Chota Nagpur plateau, which formed part of the inaccessible forest tract which the Aryan invaders called 'Jarkhand' ... [t]hese *primitive tribes* amount to 58 per cent of the population, and they nurse a resentment against the Hindu immigrants who, as they consider, have robbed them of their ancestral lands. Unrest, usually arising from agrarian causes often assuming a religious complexion, *is still endemic*.... [The tribal] *remains credulous and excitable and almost as much as ever in need of special protection* (emphasis added). (Ibid.)

In this extract, the Commission not only carried forth the colonial discourse but also reflected an inadequate understanding of the area. Unrest in south Bihar had always been agrarian, arising out of the new revenue system imposed between 1769 and 1855. Furthermore, in saying that the unrest is "still endemic", the tone of the Commission was, again, patronising. It implied that among the civilised people there was no unrest and only the 'under-civilised' societies were prone to such problems.

In the second volume of the Report (recommendations), the Commission suggested that

> they should be known in future not as 'Backward Tracts' but as 'Excluded Areas'. The state of development reached by inhabitants of these areas prevents the possibility of applying to them methods of representation adopted elsewhere. *They do not ask for self-determination, but for security of land-tenure, freedom in pursuit of their traditional methods of livelihood, and the reasonable exercise of their traditional customs. Their contentment does not depend so much on rapid political advance as on experienced and sympathetic handling, and on protection from economic subjugation by the neighbours* (emphasis added). (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 2: 128)

In this statement, the Commission completely divorced economic development and social well-being from political advancement and emphasised the desirability of British rule. It continued the protectionist approach as a means of justifying the colonial rule when it observed that

> the principal duty of the administration is to educate these people to stand on their own feet.... It is too large a task to be left to the single-

> handed efforts of missionary societies or individual officials. Co-ordination of activities and adequate funds are principally required. The typical backward tract is a deficit area, and no provincial legislature is likely to possess either the will or the means to devote special attention to its particular requirements. . . . Only if responsibility for the backward tracts is entrusted to the Centre, does it appear likely that it will be adequately discharged. (Ibid.: 129).

The integrationist approach of the Commission was also clear when it observed that "the bulk of the inhabitants of a backward tract are so little advanced that representative institutions cannot be provided". Hence such tracts should be treated as excluded, but "where backward tracts are more developed, though still unfitted to take their full share in the normal constitutional advance, different arrangements may have to be made" (Ibid.: 132). The Commission seems to have been of the view that once a certain proportion of the population of an excluded area had acquired a level of Western education and industrial development, there would be greater legitimacy for the colonial regime and, consequently, "political material" for the creation of self-governing political institutions.

The relative inability of the colonial discourse to legitimise the colonial rule in the tribal areas due to poor progress of Western education in the region ensured that the threat of another tribal revolt loomed large. The superiority of the colonial discourse in the material domain, which had been accepted by the Indian intellectuals, had also not progressed in the region. The operation of the concept of protection had further reduced the scope of this kind of intervention. Since the legitimisation of the British rule in the tribal areas was still evolving at this stage, one of the reasons for the exclusion of these districts from the operation of the ordinary laws and enactment may have been a fear of another difficult-to-control tribal uprising. The British governments in India (Imperial and provincial) could not risk such an action on the part of the tribal population in the mineral-rich belt. Moreover, another uprising would have required the deployment of a large punitive force. Such a scenario would have meant that efforts at legitimisation of the regime by the use of legislation and Western education would have to start from scratch again, not to mention the disruption caused to the mining of minerals.

Hence, it may not have been seen as desirable to interfere in the delicate balance that existed in the tribal areas under the system of exclusion. This conclusion is also borne out by the fact that even after the Government of India Act 1935, the functions of the government in this area remained what can be termed as the negative functions of the State. The missionaries and other social service organisations did whatever little development work (both economic and social) that was undertaken.

Inputs from non-officials

The Statutory Commission also drew upon inputs from non-officials. These non-official viewpoints (not incorporated in the recommendations of the report) are also important since they not only exercised some influence in shaping the perception of the Simon Commission but also enable us to understand the prevailing elements of the colonial discourse vis-à-vis the Excluded Areas and the challenges it faced. Amongst the documents presented before the Indian Statutory Commission at Patna, the memorandum submitted by the Catholic bishop of Ranchi (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 432) is noteworthy. It emphasised that the "land laws and customs should remain untouched what ever the measure of self government granted to other parts of India" and that "adequate safe guards should be provided". Further, the memorial observed that self-government "would be a distinct disadvantage to the aboriginal races" because

> [the] degree of civilisation attained by the aboriginals of Chota Nagpur is still so far below the degree attained by other races of Bihar and Orissa, that the aboriginals are unable to meet these other races on an equal footing. . . . As the matters stand now, an illiterate Bengali is more aware, more wide awake, more civilised than an aboriginal who has completed the primary course of schooling – or even the secondary course. The illiterate Bengali indeed obtains all the advantages arising out of his civilised surroundings; the educated aboriginal loses much of the fruits of education on account of the backward society in which he lives. The aboriginal society is still in the primitive stage. (Ibid.)

The memorial went on to argue that the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, which admitted tribal laws as Laws, would be ignored or

bypassed if self-government was granted to the tribal areas because "these privileges would be inevitably considered as a mere obstacle by the *more clever races* who desire to obtain a footing in their ancestral land.... Their simplicity leaves them open to the wiles of other races" (emphasis added) (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 433). Further, it cited instances like the mortgaging of crops of numerous years by the tribals, to pay off a minuscule debt, to highlight their plight and need for special treatment, without recognising that similar conditions existed all over rural India and were not peculiar to tribal south Bihar. Similarly, other arguments in support of the claim for special administration in tribal south Bihar such as inadequate knowledge of technicalities of courts and poor literacy levels were equally applicable to the rest of rural India. Hence, either the whole of rural India required special administration or there was no need to exclude the tribal areas from general administration. Arguments on similar lines were put forward in the memoranda submitted by Reverend Kenneth Kennedy, the bishop of Chota Nagpur, and the bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, Burma and Ceylon (: 434).

These documents clearly underlined the operation of the colonial discourse vis-à-vis the tribal population. They carried the presumption that the concepts of a tribal society (such as communal property) were in need of 'civilising influence' of Western rationality.

Alternative Discourse: Entirely Different Remedies

The autonomous form of community formation that was seen at the national level was replicated at the level of the Jharkhandi community and it threw up an alternative discourse to contest the dominant colonial discourse. This is reflected in the memorandum submitted by the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society.[16] (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 435). This document not only tried to break away from the colonial typecasts but also suggested an alternative framework for looking at the problems of tribal Bihar.

The memorandum began by portraying the standard bleak picture of the tribal people, their ignorance and their exploitation

by outsiders but went on to propose an entirely different set of remedies. It argued for abolition of the prevailing system of laws of tenancy as, according to it, under the existing conditions "to all intents and purposes, the aboriginal people are serfs and village organisation is 'feudalistic'. The Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act has only confirmed these unjust divisions of lands and aggravated the lifelong grievances of the aboriginals". The Chota Nagpur Improvement Society broke new grounds when it demanded that "each village should have its own Corporation for self-government in civil matters and judicial panchayat in certain matters and executive body in dealing with village lands". It also dealt in detail with the basis of franchise, divisions of existing provinces, and law and judiciary. With regard to education, the society demanded that "compulsory primary education be introduced.... [T]he education at primary stage be imparted through the medium of languages spoken in the area". It asked for a local board of education and recurring grants (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 436).

The memorandum of the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society demonstrated a dual approach to the tribal areas of south Bihar. In accordance with the established colonial discourse, it sought the implementation of policies that would further the 'desirable' aspects of Western rationality. In seeking education and self-governance, it was echoing similar demands elsewhere. However, it also sought allowances to be made to the cultural distinctiveness of the region in terms of promotion of local languages, preservation of local laws and customs. In sum, the society wanted a system of government that recognised the tribal identity (and did not exclude them from the operation of ordinary laws), with variations to suit local needs. It observed that "our judicial system should be quite different, our educational system should be different. The Government must concentrate its attention on the development of our people." (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 455).

A deputation of this society also met the Simon Commission on 17 December 1928 at Patna. At the meeting, one of the members, Mgr. Van Hoeck, stated that the question was "whether we would insist on more safeguards or whether we should like the area put under a separate administration, under a Chief Commis-

sioner or a Governor as head of Province, I would prefer the latter". He also observed: "I believe that really no insistence is sought to be placed on going back to old customs" (Ibid.: 454).

To a question by the Commission whether the deputation favoured a paternal or a popular government, the deputation spokesman responded that they were in favour of a popular government in the sense that it must be a "representative government, by an elective method, and a paternal one in the sense that the Governor and other officials of the Government should be in more direct and sympathetic touch with the people" (Ibid.). He added that "we want not only protection of our lands but we want to be treated as quite a separate people by ourselves". This is, perhaps, the oldest articulation of a tribal identity in the Jharkhand region.

Thus, in the plethora of statements and memoranda that depicted the helplessness of the tribals in a way that portrayed them as entities without any intelligence or will, the memorandum by the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society was a breath of fresh air. While others tried to entrench a paternalistic administration, this memorandum demanded self-government and greater effort at education. It also emphasised, although implicitly, that the tribal people were competent enough not to need the 'civilising influences of a paternalistic government'. In the society's view, what was essentially required was a concerted effort at providing them with avenues to learn and improve their life-prospects. This, perhaps, was the only document which questioned the system of special administration and suggested a new approach to the tribal areas. Although this document did not completely discard the colonial discourse, it went on to articulate a proto-Jharkhandi identity in whatever imperfect way it deemed fit. Despite the fact that this point of view did not find much favour with the Simon Commission, it marked the beginning of a 'subnational discourse' for political recognition of an identity that was premised on cultural attributes, not unlike the nationalist discourse.

In its main report, the Indian Statutory Commission did not refer to the rather progressive recommendations made by the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society. This, by default, implied that the Commission was in agreement with the majority view that tribal people were primitive and backward and required 'protection'.

Although a proportion of the Indian intelligentsia had helped the Commission in its investigation, they had accepted the broad premises of the colonial discourse, especially in the material domain. Therefore, there was little disagreement with respect to the continuance of the policy of excluding certain areas from ordinary administration. Moreover, the intellectuals and nationalists were vigorously engaged in the creation of an alternative discourse in India. The tribal issue was considered a part of the larger question of socio-economic change. Further, it may be assumed that even if the tribal issue was given substantial political space, it is unlikely that the nationalists, given their integrationist leanings, would have been happy to consider an autonomous administrative system for the tribals.

Colonial and 'Subnational' Discourse in the Constituent Assembly

Before discussing the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly, some space must be devoted to the tribal question during the transfer of power. Due to the absence of any major intellectual exercise about the tribal issue in the INC and other nationalist forums, the transfer-of-power papers had no major reference to the tribal issue. Sir Olaf Caroe, ICS, secretary in the external affairs department, Government of India, pointed out in 1947: "Hitherto there had been an almost absence of recognition of the important place the tribes ... generally must take in the India of the future".[17] Although he had made this observation with reference to the NWFP tribes, it reflected the general fate of the tribal issue.

There were deliberations about the tribes in the NWFP and Assam, but the general theme of the discussions and debates was focused on those aspects of the tribal areas which affected the transfer of power and Partition. Furthermore, most references to the tribal question were overshadowed by the communal question about which the government of the time was exercised. During its last few years, the colonial government was more concerned with containing communal riots, arson and looting rather than dwelling upon the future administration of the tribal areas. That was to be the task of the Constituent Assembly.

The intellectual baggage that was carried into the Constituent Assembly drew heavily on the colonial rationalist-integrationist model. The Constituent Assembly adopted more of a melting-pot model and not a 'salad-bowl' approach in which all the different communities would retain their identity and still be a part of the national community. One may venture the opinion that the former approach was a direct result of the adoption of the colonial integrationist approach. The experience of Partition seemed to vindicate the nationalists' integrationist approach. (One is not quite sure if the trend of integration of peoples different from the mainstream communities and political groups is desirable, or even safe, in a democratic system of government.) Here again, the dilemma of the political system to choose between the integrationist and salad-bowl approach towards such socio-political groups was evident.

Having accepted the superiority of the colonial discourse, in the material domain, the Constituent Assembly employed a number of colonial concepts and presumptions. The integrationist approach of the colonial discourse was reinforced in the minds of the nationalist leaders by the experience of Partition and formed the basis of the political reorganisation of India. Moreover, politics and economics were two areas where the nationalists (barring Gandhiji) had accepted the desirability of the colonial rationalist discourse. Therefore, the Constituent Assembly sought to implement the ideals that the nationalist leaders had learnt to cherish—such as, industry-led development and political democracy—and a complete break from the colonial approach could not be expected. Further, the integrationist approach of the Constituent Assembly was, perhaps, reinforced by its desire to remove the 'rule of difference' which the nationalists had contested during the freedom movement. Consequently, while some new ground was broken, a number of colonial concepts prevailed.

The Government of India Act 1935 provided a model for the new Constitution of independent India. Inputs into the constitution-making process such as the Cabinet Mission statement of 16 May 1946—which mentioned the Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas as being of particular importance for the Constituent Assembly—added to the already accepted integrationist model.

Scheme for the administration of tribal and Excluded Areas

The Cabinet Mission statement directed that an Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities should be established at the preliminary session of the Constituent Assembly with representation of all the interests affected (including all religious minorities and Excluded Areas). One of its functions was to report to the Constituent Assembly on a scheme for the administration of the tribal and the Excluded Areas.[18] Consequently, the advisory committee in its meeting on 27 February 1947 set up three subcommittees. One was to report on the future administration of the Excluded Areas in Assam while another was to consider the future administrative arrangements in the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam).[19] The latter, thus, considered the tribal areas of Bihar. The chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas suggested that a joint meeting of the two subcommittees should be held in August 1947. The report of the Joint Sub-Committee exercised a profound influence in shaping the approach of the framers of the Constitution of India towards the tribal population or 'problem'. It noted that

> the areas inhabited by the tribes ... are difficult to access, highly malarial and infested also in some cases by other diseases like yaws and venereal disease and *lacking in such civilizing facilities as roads, schools, dispensaries and water supply*. The tribes themselves are for the most part *extremely simple people who can be and are exploited with ease by plainsfolk* resulting in the passage of land formerly cultivated by them to moneylenders and other erstwhile non-agriculturists. *While a good number of superstitions and even harmful practices are prevalent among them the tribes have their own customs and way of life* with institutions like tribal and village panchayats or councils which are very effective in smoothing village administration. *The sudden disruption of the tribal customs and ways by exposure to the impact of a more complicated and sophisticated manner of life is capable of doing great harm*. Considering past experience and strong temptation to take advantage of the tribals' simplicity and weaknesses it is essential to provide statutory safeguards for the protection of the land which is the mainstay of the aboriginal's economic life and for his customs and institutions which, apart from being his own, contain element of value (emphasis added). (*Report of Joint Sub-Committee* 1947: 2 [enclosure])

This statement by the Joint Sub-Committee is quite important in deciphering the then prevailing discourse with regard to the tribals. In a number of ways, this approach was a direct continuation of the colonial discourse. The statement continues the colonial stereotype of tribals as savage and intellectually weak, who have no understanding or capabilities to protect themselves from being exploited. References to superstitions and harmful practices also reflect a similar point of view. This creation of a 'them' versus 'we' dichotomy resulted in a paternalistic, almost patronising attitude in the Constituent Assembly, which reflected a heavy dependence on the colonial discourse.

The above approach also meant that the concept of protection as witnessed in the colonial period was carried on in the post-colonial period, albeit in a somewhat different form. In its interim report, the Sub-Committee on Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) was also of the view that the people of the

> Excluded Areas have no experience in local self-government institutions of the modern or statutory type and are of course not represented in the legislature. The management of a local board is perhaps likely to be a much bigger undertaking for the people of these areas than the mere election of a representative to the Legislature and the establishment of such bodies needs perhaps a period of official guidance and control. (*Interim Report* 1947: 4)

This subcommittee thus emphasised that it was not prudent to leave the solution of the tribal problem to the provincial governments with limited financial resources and competing claims. The protectionist element of the colonial discourse continued without any major modification.

In its sincerity to explore alternative administrative arrangements for the tribal population, the subcommittee questioned the desirability of continuing the policy of exclusion of the tribal areas. It pointed out that the system of exclusion, despite being in force for a number of years, had not yielded many benefits. It laid the blame for this at the doors of erstwhile governors since such areas were outside the realms of legislative voting. It pointed out that "no definite programme for the development of the Excluded Areas with the view to removing the disability of exclusion

has been followed" (*Interim Report* 1947: 5). It blamed the system of shared responsibility for the ills in the administration of tribal areas. It stressed the point that

> the representatives of the partially Excluded Areas have not been capable of bringing sufficient pressure and influence to bear on the Ministry. Further, some of the Partially Excluded Areas which constitute small pockets in large districts and constituencies could apparently be lost sight of and their interests subordinated to those of larger areas in which they were contained. (Ibid.)

The subcommittee summed up the operation of the policy of having Excluded/Partially Excluded Areas in the following words: the "partial exclusion or exclusion has been of very little practical value. There has been neither educational nor economic development on any appreciable scale. The object of special administration has thus not been achieved, and it is clear that if the hill tribes are to be *brought up to the level of the rest of the population* the strongest measures are now necessary" (emphasis added) (*Interim Report* 1947: 5). The subcommittee saw development as defined by the mainstream, and consequent assimilation, as the final solution to the problems of backward areas. The rationalist model of development, therefore, remained the central plank of the subcommittee's recommendations.

There appears to be a degree of contradiction in the point of view of the subcommittee. On the one hand, it expressed its doubts on the necessity of having a system of special administration, whereas on the other hand, it recommended a special administration to 'bring' the tribal people up to the level of the rest of the population (*Interim Report* 1947: 5). This inconsistency, perhaps, was part of the integrationist approach that sought to unify all the peoples of India under one administration without exception and stemmed from the desire to end the 'rule of difference' and the underlying belief in the protection of 'lesser developed communities'. The subcommittee did not find it desirable for the administrative arrangements to reflect cultural identities and emphasised the necessity of fast-track rationalist development and industrialisation in the future administrative arrangements for the tribal areas.

On the question of representation in the legislatures also, the subcommittee favoured reserved seats in a joint electorate. By

advocating a joint electorate, with reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes, the subcommittee tried to politically unify all the communities, with adequate safeguards for the more backward sections. Here, the unifying and integrationist approach of the subcommittee is evident.

Interestingly, despite earlier references by the subcommittee to the unique cultural characteristics of the tribes, their case was identified with that of Scheduled Castes. It pointed out that the tribal population was

> in fact more backward in education and in their economic condition than the Scheduled Castes. Representation in proportion to their numbers in the Legislatures, even if some of them are not vocal or able to argue their case will emphasise the importance and urgency of their problems. And it is to the interest of the country to see that these original inhabitants of the Indian soil are *brought up to the level of the rest so that they can contribute in due measure to the progress of the country rather than be a drag on the rest*.... The aboriginals have to take part in direct elections sometime and the sooner their training for this starts the better (emphasis added). (*Interim Report* 1947: 9)

In comparing the cases of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the report made no reference to the specific tribal culture and way of life (although this is acknowledged elsewhere in the report). Also, implicitly, homogenisation was the desired goal, according to the subcommittee: all communities had to become one and contribute to national progress. This discourse carried a dangerous thread of uniformity and assimilation. Besides, the tribal people in their present state were considered a drag on national life and their contribution as workers in mines, tea gardens and elsewhere was not taken into account.

In the years immediately after Independence, nationalist euphoria and the trauma of Partition emphasised the need for a manifestly integrationist approach. The national community was perceived to subsume all other identities. We now have the benefit of hindsight to point out that this was only a fond hope. Perhaps, the nationalist leaders who constituted the subcommittee believed that by vigorously promoting an 'Indian' identity supported by a uniform economic and administrative system, local identities would be subsumed into the national identity. The

desirability of a unifying and uniform model of development, as defined by the majority community, thus permeated the report.

The recommendation to de-schedule the districts of Manbhum, Hazaribagh and Palamu derived from this belief. According to the subcommittee, these districts had attained a level of development that did not require special treatment. It may be pointed out that these districts were more urbanised due to mining and other industrial activities. In these districts, the tribals were working in industrial enterprises where conditions of exploitation were similar to the ones in the agricultural sector. It implies that the subcommittee did not consider that there was scope of exploitation in industrial occupations. The undertone of the subcommittee was that the 'civilising' effects of industry were a remedy to all problems associated with tribal regions. The colonial rationalist model with its dependence on industrialisation can be seen clearly. Moreover, the colonial approach of putting an end to exclusion in areas where industry and education had progressed to a certain level was continued.

Although the interim report of the subcommittee did not generate much debate, Jaipal Singh, the tribal leader from the Jharkhand region, put forward a minute of dissent in the report in which he argued against the de-scheduling of the districts of Manbhum, Hazaribagh and Palamu. He pointed out that according to the 1941 census, this area was inhabited by 1,479,485 adivasis (tribal population). According to him, "how I can agree to the demolition of the economic, geographical and ethnic unity and entity of the Chota Nagpur Division. It is not right that we should give an *ex parte* verdict and change the *status quo* of these three districts".[20]

Jaipal Singh was, in effect, raising the question of tribal identity. His statement also implied the importance of considering the needs, opinions and aspirations of the tribal people. He emphasised the need to collect the views of the tribal population on this new arrangement. In some ways, Jaipal Singh was utilising the same arguments which the nationalists had advanced to the British administration. He was emphasising the same rationalist arguments for the recognition of the tribal community, as the campaigners for popular government had done vis-à-vis British rule in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Such autonomous form of creation of political identities by the 'subnational' community in the Jharkhand region was already emerging during the last decade of British rule in India. By 1948–49, the subnational community thus formed was beginning to demand political recognition by the Indian state. In its final report, the Sub-Committee on Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) took note of the discontent in the Chota Nagpur region and said:

> the feeling [is] common among educated tribals and shared by non-tribals in considerable measure that Chota Nagpur has little share in the administration commensurate with its area, population and industrial importance and is being neglected by the Government which is made up of elements interested mostly in the rest of Bihar. Certain aboriginal witnesses have expressed their views about the neglect of Chota Nagpur in no uncertain terms and suggested that the ameliorative measures claimed by the Government are purely defensive action prompted by the separation movement.... *The extreme expression of the discontent prevalent in Chota Nagpur is the separatist movement which demands the formation of a new province of Jharkhand out of the partially excluded area* (emphasis added). (*Final Report* 1947: 2)

This section of the final report negates the observations made in the interim report that the adivasis were not politically conscious and were incapable of expressing, protecting and promoting their interest. A politically passive community cannot be conceived of as demanding a better share in the products of economic activities of the area, a better administration and general well-being or development. The common people of the area might not have been as vocal as their educated tribal brethren, but the fact that some kind of separatist movement was observed by the subcommittee implies that the tribals were not so passive as the subcommittee had presumed. In its final report, the subcommittee was also forced to admit that "the problem of administration in this tract must be dealt with not only by economic and educational improvements but also by remedies which recognised its political and psychological aspects; and we would lay the maximum emphasis on the urgency of action in both these directions" (*Final Report* 1947: 2).

Jaipal Singh again recorded a minute of dissent in the final report, on the lines of the one in the interim report, arguing

against the de-scheduling of certain areas in south Bihar. However, what is pertinent here is the fact that the chairperson of the subcommittee, A. V. Thakkar, decided to record a note of comment on this minute of dissent. This expressed the view that "'Scheduling' has a certain special meaning which was not explained to nor known by the witnesses at all, not even to Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha. Therefore they could not distinguish between Scheduled and non-Scheduled areas in which tribes reside."[21] This again reflected a strangely deep-rooted belief about the lack of understanding amongst the tribals, despite evidence to the contrary. The above discussion highlights that the subcommittee drew heavily on the practices and typology of the preceding colonial government.[22]

Despite its heavy dependence on the colonial discourse, the Joint Sub-Committee on Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) and the Northeast Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas broke new ground when, in its report, it recommended the creation of tribes advisory councils. It observed:

> Taking into account the past history of these tracts, the needs and susceptibilities of the people ... it appears desirable ... that Provincial Governments should be advised to take such actions as the establishment of District Councils and Tribes Advisory Councils as may be possible immediately to give effect to the policy recommended by us and to make such statutory regulations for this purpose as may be necessary. (*Report of Joint Sub-Committee* 1947: 1)

The Joint Sub-Committee's recommendation that vacant land in tribal areas should be allotted for cultivation after consulting the tribes advisory councils—to be set up in all states with a considerable tribal population—was another step that sought greater democratisation of government decisions. Here the Joint Sub-Committee expressed an eagerness to implement democratic institutions of some kind and was not ready to wait until the new Constitution came into force. This proves that this subcommittee found indications of the tribals being able to handle democratic institutions despite their unfamiliarity with modern democratic structures.

The recommendation of the subcommittee (on tribal areas other than Assam) on land alienation also marks a break with the past. The subcommittee observed that "[a]lienation of any kind,

even to other tribals, may have to be prohibited or severely restricted" (*Final Report* 1947: 25). This observation reflects the fact that the subcommittee saw the need to treat the tribal agriculturists as akin to poor peasants elsewhere, and acknowledged the possibility of some tribals becoming exploiters (despite their tribal origins) of other tribal people.

Debate within the Constituent Assembly

The report of the Joint Sub-Committee did not generate much debate in the Constituent Assembly. Curiously, several references were made to clause 20 of the Cabinet Mission statement dated 16 May 1946 under which advisory committees on Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas was set up. One gets the impression that had the Cabinet Mission not made such a reference, the Constituent Assembly would have perhaps ignored the issue of the tribal population altogether. In its zeal to unify India under one kind of administration and to bring about effective integration of all areas and people, the Constituent Assembly might have not devoted any time and attention to this question.

The members of the Constituent Assembly by and large shared the perception of the subcommittees. Yudhisthir Mishra (of Orissa General constituency) opined: "I cannot but strongly press for the *protection* of these tribal people ... by bringing these tribal areas under the scope of the Fifth Schedule" (emphasis added) (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 1): 494). Further, he was of the opinion that the "tribal areas according to the proposed Constitution will no longer be treated like the excluded or partially excluded Areas in the present Constitution.... The scheduled areas specified in the Fifth Schedule will not be excluded from the jurisdiction of the Legislature or executive [and] the Tribal Advisory Committee ... will only work as a sort of check on the executive power of the provinces as far as tribal matters are concerned" (Ibid.). This statement reflects the presumption that once the tribal areas were brought under general administration, albeit with checks, the problems of all such areas would be solved.

The Constituent Assembly's approach on this issue also reflects a belief in the mainstream, industry-led model of develop-

ment as a panacea for all ills in the tribal areas. The framers of the Indian Constitution believed that problems and discontentment in the tribal areas existed due to their exclusion from the mainstream development patterns. By implication, it was perhaps felt that there was no need for special administration or development programmes in the tribal areas. This attitude is summarised in H. V. Kamath's statement:

> It will be agreed [by all] that we do not contemplate the continuance of these various tribal scheduled areas in the same condition as they are today. I am sure that all of us visualise the day when *they will be brought up to the level of the adjoining neighbouring provinces and will be integrated with the Provinces and States that lie contiguous* to them. We do not contemplate a permanently differently type of administration for them from what is obtaining or might obtain or will obtain in the rest of India (emphasis added). (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 1): 494)

The use of the terms like "brought up" rather than 'come up', certainly reflects a patronising attitude towards the tribal population. The underlying idea was that if the goal of assimilation of the tribal population into the national mainstream was to be achieved, the 'superior civilised people'—that is the non-tribals—would have to make deliberate efforts to 'civilise them'. It seems to be an indigenous corollary of the 'white man's burden', and elements of the colonial discourse are quite clear.

This perception, although shared by the majority, did not signify an absolute consensus on the issue. Jaipal Singh differed on a number of issues. In the debates on the Draft Constitution, on 24 August 1949, Jaipal Singh delivered a lengthy political speech. His remarks are relevant and useful for this study since this is one of the few places in the Constituent Assembly debates where an effort was made to divorce the case of Scheduled Tribes from that of the Scheduled Castes. Jaipal Singh also raised the issue of the existence of a tribal community in Jharkhand. He pointed out that the Constituent Assembly had not had the opportunity to discuss the recommendations made by the two tribal areas subcommittees and wanted more time to be devoted to the issue. He emphasised that the tribal people were the true and original inhabitants of India, and as such had a claim to the whole of

India. Yet, Jaipal Singh emphasised that the reservation of seats for tribals in the legislatures was necessary. Referring to the fact that Muslims and Christians had given up their claim for such reservation, Jaipal Singh observed that

> Adivasis are not giving up anything because they never had anything. It seems very surprising that people talk of democracy when their whole conduct has been undemocratic in the past [centuries]. It is essential that these people be compelled to come out of their jungle-fastness [*sic*]. It is for that reason reservation is very necessary. If you want unity in this country, we must all get together. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 651)

Jaipal Singh did not find that "all the people getting together" and reservation of seats for tribals were contradictory. Even while emphasising the unity of India, he demanded reservation of seats for the tribals, thus implying that the tribal identity was a part of the Indian identity and yet separate from it. The claim of a Jharkhandi 'subnational' identity for political recognition was thus underway.

Moreover, Jaipal Singh emphasised that the tribals no longer lived in jungles and interaction between them and the rest of the people was commonplace. He thus underlined the capability of the tribals to cope and interact successfully with the rest of the world. However, contradicting himself in the very next statement, he went on to state that the tribals had always been exploited by the dikus which the "[a]divasi rightly resents." Jaipal Singh asked for concessions for the tribals, based on their economic and political isolation and consequent backwardness. He was almost prophetic when he said: "I am not at all optimistic that in the short space of ten years, which means two general elections, Adivasis will have come to the level of rest of India" (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 651). Simultaneously, however, he supported joint electorates:

> I welcome the fact that the Adivasis will be elected from the joint general electorates.... I also welcome the fact that the House, as a whole, is unanimous that Adivasis must be compelled to come into the Government of the provinces as well as at the Centre.... There must be 51 [members] because there will be 51 seats reserved for them. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 652)

Jaipal Singh's support for joint electorates was probably due to unitary influences so common in those days, as well as the integrationist colonial discourse that held sway. However, he was quick to point out that the tribals, being one of the most backward sections of the society, required special treatment. He was of the opinion "that any section of our society that is economically and politically backward must have safeguards and provisions that will enable it to come up to the general level" (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 653).

On similar lines, Yudhisthir Mishra pointed out that if the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Tribes were restricted to a ten-year period, it would not be enough to serve the interests of Scheduled Tribes. He was of the opinion that Scheduled Tribes were far more backward compared to the Scheduled Castes. He declared:

> I hold that the standard of education and material well-being of the Scheduled tribes are lower in most cases than even those of the Scheduled Castes. This is clear from the representation of the scheduled tribes in this House in comparison with the representation that the Scheduled Castes have been able to secure. Even the representative character of this House has been challenged by some people. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 675)

Unlike Jaipal Singh, Yudhisthir Mishra, in emphasising the need for reservation for Scheduled Tribes, differentiated between the needs of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. His ground for such a distinction was that the tribal people would require a greater amount of time than the Scheduled Castes to be able to play on a level field with other communities. Nonetheless, Mishra was aware of the need for special treatment of the tribal population. Although his was a minority opinion in the Constituent Assembly, it certainly was a departure from the dominant discourse.

Speaking on the occasion, Brajeshwar Prasad opposed the extension of representation to tribal areas and pointed out that "by giving them a few seats here and there, their economic condition and their educational level will in no way be improved" (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 664). He was one of the few members of the Constituent Assembly who argued for direct

support to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, in terms of their actual needs. However, he was opposed to tribal representation in the legislatures, as he was unsure if "representation in legislatures will in anyway alter the material and moral levels of these people" (: 663). The continuation of the colonial discourse of 'sympathetic and experienced handling', as opposed to self-determination, of the tribal population is quite clear.

Distinct identity of the tribals

Jaipal Singh outlined, though not in detail, the existence of an identity amongst the tribals as different from the non-tribal population. He pointed out that it did not befit the rest of India to tell the tribals what was democracy because

> Adibasi society is the most democratic element in this country. Can the rest of India say the same thing? ... In Adibasi society all are equal, rich or poor. Everyone has equal opportunity and I do not wish that people should get away with the idea that by writing this Constitution and operating it we are trying to put a new idea into the Adibasi society. What we are actually doing is you are learning and taking something.... Non-Adibasi society has learnt much and has still to learn a good deal. Adibasis are the most democratic people and they will not let India get smaller or weaker.... I would like the members [to] not be so condescending. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 653–54)

During the debates, Jaipal Singh underlined the linguistic aspect of tribal identity. He pointed out that outsiders were treated suspiciously because of their ignorance of tribal languages and proclaimed that they would be "treated with less of suspicion than they are now" if they knew some tribal languages (Ibid.: 990–1).

Also pertinent is the fact that this kind of articulation of tribal identity was not seen as clashing with the Indian identity in any way. According to Jaipal Singh, the dominant viewpoint of working towards a pan-national identity which would subsume all sub-identities may not have been a desirable option as these identities were not necessarily at cross purposes vis-à-vis the national identity. (This position survives till today.) Jaipal Singh stated that

> What is necessary is that the backward groups in our country should be enabled to stand on their own legs so that they can assert themselves. It is not the intention of this Constitution, nor do I desire it, that the advanced community should be carrying my people in their arms for the rest of eternity. All that we plead is that the wherewithal should be provided ... so that we will be able to stand on our own legs and regain the lost nerves and be useful citizens of India.... I may assure non-Adibasis that Adibasis will play a much bigger part than you imagine, if only you will be honest about your intentions and let them play a part they have a right to play. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 17): 654)

The above speech carries a claim of the adivasis for better treatment as well as an articulation of an autonomous community. While a clear demand for recognition of tribals as a separate identity was absent, the existence of such an identity was accepted. More importantly, this is one of the few instances where those who spoke on behalf of the tribals demanded that the rest of India give tribals their due, rather than expressing pity for the tribals. Here was a nascent expression of tribal identity in terms of its difference from the rest of India. The point that is important here is that the tribals were not in any way—politically, culturally or socially—inferior from the mainstream but only different. This strain of tribal identity survives till date, as was revealed in the field study.

In the debates on 5 September 1949, Jaipal Singh insisted that there should be a provision obliging the governors of states with a significant Scheduled Tribes population to report on the state of their development every year and not at the discretion of the president, as envisaged. According to him, without such a provision, the Government of India would not be aware of the state of affairs in the tribal areas. Further, Jaipal Singh was critical that only an advisory status was envisaged for the tribes advisory councils and not an actively political one (as had been recommended by the Joint Sub-Committee on tribal areas). He asserted that the "Tribes Advisory Council should be effective and have a real say in what is being done" (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 26): 976) rather than being invested with mere advisory powers subject to the pleasure of the governor or ruler of a province or state.

Separate tribal identity undermined in dominant discourse

Jaipal Singh's speech generated only a lukewarm response from other members of the Constituent Assembly. The debate on this issue continued on the lines of the dominant discourse. Shibban Lal Saksena, speaking on the same day, probably summed up the majority view of the Constituent Assembly, which drew upon the colonial discourse:

> The existence of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled areas are a stigma on our nation just as the existence of untouchability is a stigma on the Hindu religion. That these brethren of ours are still in such a sub-human state of existence is something for which we should be ashamed. Of course, all these years this country was a slave of the British, but we cannot be free from blame ... these scheduled tribes and areas must as soon as possible become a thing of the past.... I only want that these scheduled tribes and scheduled areas should be developed so quickly that they may become indistinguishable from the rest of the Indian population and that this responsibility should be thrown on the Union Government and on the Parliament. (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 26): 979)

This statement reflects the continuation of the approach developed by the colonial official-scholars that the tribal community was waiting to be absorbed and integrated into either the Hindu community or the mainstream communities. Until such time, there was a necessity to protect the tribes and make efforts to facilitate their speedy integration.

The dominant nationalist discourse in the Constituent Assembly also undermined any suggestion of a separate tribal identity. Reacting to the possibility of the existence of a 'subnational' tribal identity that does not clash with the national identity, as raised by Jaipal Singh, K. M. Munshi pointed out:

> which he called Adibasis collectively form part of a single community ... is ... an entirely incorrect statement of facts. Each province has many scheduled tribes of its own. Each of these tribes is different from the other ethnically as mellas [*sic*] [well as] from the point of view of language, ... social and religious customs. There is nothing common between one tribe and another.... To call them Adibasis and group them together as one community will not only be an untruth in itself but would be absolutely ruinous for the tribes themselves.

> Therefore it is necessary that in order to give them a proper place in the society, different sets of activities would have to be adopted. This is the cardinal difference between the attitude of my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh, and the rest of us. The Adibasis are not one conscious, corporate, collective whole in this country, that somebody can speak in its name or can lead a movement combining them into a single unit.... We want that the Scheduled Tribes in the whole country should be *protected from the destructive impact of races possessing a higher and more aggressive culture and should be encouraged to develop their own autonomous life*; at the same time we want them to take a larger part of the *country adopted*. They should not be isolated communities or little republics to be perpetuated for ever (emphasis added). (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 26): 997–8)

Continuing the dominant integrationist nationalist discourse, Munshi saw no merit in Jaipal Singh and Yudhisthir Mishra's efforts at seeking greater powers and a more important role for the tribes advisory councils. He opined that "Tribes Advisory Council should ... aid and advise the Governor in all matters" regarding the administration of scheduled areas and found it "an utter absurdity" that the governor be obliged to act on such advice. Munshi emphasised that "they [tribals] would say that they do not understand a word of it [Moneylenders Act]". According to him, the "word 'consulted' ... has been put in the place of 'advice' purposely". He saw it as impossible that the tribes advisory council of a small tribe would come to a conclusion with regard to an elaborate act of Parliament "as to what provisions of it should or should not apply." Hence, according to Munshi: "with regard to the regulations of transfer of land and other things relating to the welfare of the tribes, the tribal assembly will have to be consulted. Naturally their interests will be placed before the government in the course of consultations. But to make decision depend upon the advice of this assembly, would in the end lead to disaster to the tribes themselves" (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 26): 998–9).

Other members shared this paternalism, integrationist thrust and reluctance to delegate powers to local bodies. Kuladhar Chaliha (Assam General constituency) was of the opinion that if tribes were allowed to run administration then it would be a negation of justice or administration due to the practice of summary justice for a grievance, prevalent amongst some tribes. He

apprehended separatist tendencies at work if delegation of powers was resorted to and feared that 'tribalistan' would be created just as "you have created Pakistan." Therefore, he was in favour of Central and provincial governments keeping ample reserve powers (*Constituent Assembly Debates* 1949, 9 (pt. 27): 1007–8).

To summarise, the main current of the debates in the Constituent Assembly was assimilation of the different sections of a very varied tribal population, as was the case with other minorities. The members of the Constituent Assembly seemed to be of the opinion that all identities should merge into the Indian identity as soon as possible. They could not conceive of a multi-ethnic, multifaceted India in which all sub-identities would combine to form a larger Indian identity. The salad-bowl approach was clearly absent in the Constituent Assembly debates.

Another notable point in the debates was that people from across the political spectrum spoke on the question of reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Their main line in supporting this issue was the past exploitation of the tribes. The members who argued against it dwelt, by and large, on the fissiparous tendencies which they saw built into the logic of granting reservation of seats.

It is also interesting to note that despite an attempt on the part of Jharkhandi leaders to create an autonomous community premised on tribal cultural uniqueness, the issue of speedy development of the tribal population was repeatedly emphasised. The integrationist view could not conceive of any challenge to the national community from any lesser community, and development was seen as the remedy to whatever dissatisfaction that existed in the region. In the years to come, the identity aspects of the Jharkhand movement came to be increasingly dominated by the development aspects.

Hence, although the Constituent Assembly continued a number of elements of the colonial discourse into the Constitution, it also broke new ground with its emphasis on universal adult franchise for tribals, and welfare policies for speedy development of tribal areas. It must be pointed out that the material domain of the colonial discourse was at the root of a number of such issues. Once the nationalist government had taken office, it sought to implement all the elements of colonial discourse that the nationalists saw as desirable. The creation of the nationalist state was seen as the fulfilment of the national community, and the Indian state did not have much intellectual use for the autonomous community that had been imagined by the nationalists. The independent Indian state left this aspect of nationalist thought to the regional communities to experiment with and, in some cases, achieve political recognition from the Indian state. For instance, the linguistic reorganisation of Indian states in 1956 was an acceptance by the State that some degree of political recognition to 'subnational' communities was required.

Tribal Policy in Independent India

In 1959, under Article 339[23] of the new Constitution which came into force in 1950, the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission was appointed[24] under the chairmanship of U. N. Dhebar. In defining the problem before it, the commission observed that "the term 'tribe' is nowhere defined in the Constitution" (*Report of the Scheduled Areas* n.d., 1: 1.1) which merely states "that the Scheduled Tribes are 'the tribes or the tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities' which the President may specify by public notification" (*Constitution of India* 1996: Art. 342, 1.2). It has a different meaning for different people in different contexts. This state of affairs as far as the definition of tribes is concerned continues till date.

The commission drew upon the majority points of view of the Constituent Assembly and held that "everyone who has had something to do with the *tribal problem* can bear witness to the burning desire of these unspoilt children of Mother India *for advance and progress consistent with their notion of culture and civilized existence*" (emphasis added) (*Report of the Scheduled Areas* n.d., 1: 1.20). Thus, ten years after the new Constitution came into force, it was evident that with regard to tribal people, the colonial discourse had survived in some form. Moreover, the Indian state seemed to have become totally engrossed with the issue of speedy implementation of development policies. As far as the Indian state was concerned, the question of the nature of administrative arrangements for the tribal areas had been addressed and resolved by the Constituent Assembly. Consequently, the

subsequent SC/ST commissions did not question the suitability of the industry-led model of development and instead devoted their attention to the factors that hindered the implementation of the industrialisation-integration model of development.

Hence, the Dhebar Commission observed that "there is the problem that the tribals belong to varying and widely different stage of development" and in that context highlighted "the problem of integration and development". It went on to declare: "our objective is advancement and integration of tribals[;] . . . our aim has been . . . to secure to the tribal people, along with all other people of India, a social order based upon equality of status and opportunity and a fraternity" (*Report of the Scheduled Areas* n.d., 1: 1.20). Thus, the commission continued with the integrationist point of view which was the mainstream view at that time and harped upon the "great awakening" of the tribal people by means of massive development activities carried out by the State machinery. This perception neither questioned the logic of integrating the diverse identities into one, nor challenged the soundness of implementing development programmes that had little relevance to the poor people and their lives, leave alone tribals.

In light of the above, it is no surprise that the subsequent reports of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission have become more or less statistical diaries, concerned mainly with the performance of the public policy machinery. They do not analyse the rationale behind a certain government policy. For instance, the reports of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission 1966–67, the Study Team on Tribal Development Programmes 1969, and the Advisory Committee on the Revision of the List of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1965, all treated the tribal issues as aspects of the larger problem of efficient implementation of development policies. The report on the development of tribal areas, by the National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas 1981, continued with the same approach.

Over the years, there is thus no noticeable difference in the approach of the Indian state from that of the Constituent Assembly: *(a)* the tribals need to be 'civilised', *(b)* development as defined by the mainstream is extremely desirable, *(c)* tribal groups

need to be integrated and assimilated into the mainstream, and *(d)* tribal customs need 'protection' of the majority community. The thread of emphasis on the efficient implementation of the development model to resolve all socio-economic and political conflict continues unbroken. In that sense, the colonial discourse continues in contemporary India as well.

Here it may be observed that various tribal communities did not see the issue from the point of view of the Indian state. The autonomous forms of creation of a community continued in post-independent India. The lessons that the nationalists had learnt from the colonial discourse were also internalised by the smaller communities. These communities started using the same tools which the nationalists had used and began demanding greater political autonomy. The State, premised on rationalist assumptions, could do little to contain such mobilisations. Consequently, various sections of the population, especially those outside the mainstream, like the tribals, started demanding political recognition and a share in the largesse of the State's development funds. Although one cannot find a document that redefines the policy towards such sections (in terms of accommodation of the demands of various identities), in practice there has been such a trend—although within the bounds of the Constitution. The marginalised identities have benefited from greater availability of educational and economic avenues, and there has emerged an idea which is quite unique and new in India, in particular, and the world, at large: the newly articulated identities now lay a claim to better economic prospects and demand the State's response. These groups are no longer content to gratefully accept whatever the State machinery is able to deliver. They demand that the State machinery should perform well or else concede administrative powers to local arrangements.[25] Since these groups are unable to influence the Central policy agenda, they resort to a typical Indian avenue: 'agitate first, demand later'.

The Indian state, when pressed hard by these highly mobilised and articulated groups, has been making important administrative concessions in the form of delegated and decentralised administration. This aspect of the Jharkhandi case shall be discussed at length in chapter 7.

Notes

1. Weberian model of bureaucracy refers to a rationally organised hierarchical bureaucracy regulated by technical or legal rules with clear functional demarcation and requisite authority. Resources of the bureaucracy are distinct from those of holding office under it, and written records are maintained for all actions undertaken. The holder of an office is paid a salary which is graded according to the office. The holder of such an office in a bureaucracy cannot appropriate the office and is selected on the basis of professional competence. Further, such a bureaucracy is seen to be implementing its functions rationally and in a politically neutral manner.
2. For instance, Chatterjee (1986).
3. The close relationship between colonialism and imperialism (also politics and economics) was enunciated by Lenin, in his celebrated pamphlet on imperialism, and highlighted by Marxist writings such as Hobsbawm (1987).
4. For a full discussion of the processes by which the nationalist discourse emerged, see Panikkar (1995); Kaviraj (1994, 1992) and Chatterjee (1994).
5. Some strands of nationalist discourse such as that of the Arya Samaj believed that classical Indian thought and practices were superior in the material realm too.
6. This was unlike the earlier period when social legislation was desired by most reformers.
7. Chatterjee (1994) discusses why the cultural domain was more amenable to the creation of the community than the material domain.
8. The colonial discourse embodied the concept that there was an essential difference between the British rulers and the Indian subjects. This led to a 'rule of difference' that dwelt on the superiority of the European race and their cultural practices over the Indian population and their practices. Examples of this were: barring of all Indians from certain areas of Indian cities and the outcry from the European population living in India over the Ilbert Bill whereby an Indian judge could try European offenders.
9. I am grateful to Dr David Taylor for his comments and suggestions on this formulation.
10. With some modifications, this point of view is the foundation behind the BJP's concept of *vanvasis*.
11. For instance, the Report of Joint Commissioners Dent and Captain Wilkinson, dated 4 September 1833, regarding the disturbances in Barabhum and neighbouring Parganas during the Kol rebellion blamed the local *ilakedars, zamindars, and thikedars* as primarily responsible for the disturbances. These intermediaries had increased the rent by 35 per cent in just a few years (*Bihar District Gazetteers: Ranchi* 1970: 52–3).

12. This arrangement of exclusion applied to tribal areas in the backward regions: Amindivi and Laccadive Islands and Minicoy Islands in the erstwhile province of Madras (now the union territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshwadeep Islands), the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bengal (now in Bangladesh), the area of Spiti and Lahaul in the Kangra district of the province of Punjab (now in Himachal Pradesh) and Angul in the province of Bihar and Orissa (now in Orissa).
13. The Statutory Commission reported in 1930 that the whole of the Assam Backward Tracts (an area of approximately 50,000 sq. mi.) was represented by one nominated member in the provincial legislature, who for a considerable length of time was a Welsh missionary.
14. Vis-à-vis the colonial state, the demand for greater political recognition (as will be seen later in this chapter) took the form of a demand before the Simon Commission for greater democratic administration in the Excluded Areas (including the demand for the Chota Nagpur region to be converted into a chief commissioner's or a governor's province). With regard to the post-colonial state, this demand crystallised into a demand for an autonomous state.
15. "The tomes of the Congress resolutions did not contain a word about the tribal issue; probably there was no attempt to identify the issues in the times of the all-consuming struggle for independence, when the tribal issue was considered a minor part of the wider social and economic challenge" (Singh 1985: 177).
16. See chapter 3 for the importance of the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society.
17. "Minutes of First Day of First Governors' Conference", 15 April 1947, L/PO/6/123: 372–4 ff., 381–92 ff. reproduced in Mansergh (1981: 252).
18. "Statement of the Cabinet Mission", 16 May 1946, para 19 (iv), reproduced in Shiva Rao (1966: 209–18).
19. The third subcommittee was entrusted with the task of considering the tribal areas in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. After Partition, therefore, only two subcommittees functioned, chaired by A. V. Thakkar and G. N. Bardoloi.
20. "Minute of Dissent by Jaipal Singh", 19 August 1947 (*Interim Report* 1947: App. D).
21. "Note by the Chairman on the Minutes of Dissent by Shri Jaipal Singh," 25 September, 1947 (*Final Report* 1947).
22. The Sub-Committee on the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (other than Assam) made some further observations which show that it was not only heavily dependent on the colonial discourse but also had an inadequate understanding of the actual needs of the

areas concerned. It recommended that shifting cultivation "should be eliminated as soon as possible" (*Final Report* 1947: 23), without taking into account whether an alternate strategy was valid for such areas. It seems that the members found it difficult to create new frames of reference for the tribal population. The only new additions were the emphases on the unity of India, democratisation and universal franchise. The emphasis on these areas owes its origin to the material realm of the colonial discourse that the nationalists had enthusiastically adopted.

23. Article 339 stipulates: "The President may at anytime and shall at the expiration of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution by order appoint a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States" (*Constitution of India* 1996).
24. Vide Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs notification, no. 11/6/59–SCT.IV DT.
25. I am grateful to Dr Sudipta Kaviraj for his valuable comments on this line of argument.

3

Changing Dimensions of the Jharkhand Movement

Socio-political movements such as the Jharkhand movement are dynamic in nature and undergo a series of changes over the years. These changes are brought about by the compulsions arising from the nature of the movement itself as well as by the efforts of political parties and the State to undermine, co-opt and support the movement, depending on the political contingencies. In this chapter, the changing dynamics of the Jharkhand movement have been delineated to locate the movement in its political context.

Pre-independence Phase

The Jharkhand region, due to its dense forests, inaccessible terrain and wild animals "appear[ed] never to have been completely subdued" until the colonial period (*Bihar District Gazetteers: Ranchi* 1970: 42). Accounts of the region do not exist until the time of Hiuen Tsang who visited India around A.D. 645. Hiuen Tsang talks of the kingdom of Kie-chu-u-khi-lo which seems to refer to the Jharkhand region. In the records of his travel, he mentions that the capital of this kingdom was about 117 miles to the northwest of Tamarlipti (Ibid. *Santhal Parganas* n.d.: 42). The Mauryan kingdom seems to have established its supremacy over the region but, apparently, had never been able to completely subdue the region. Similarly, "it is debatable whether Chota Nagpur acknowledged the sovereignty of the Kushanas or the Guptas or it remained independent throughout.... Though the finds of gold coins of the Kushanas may not establish their lordship over it, it may be inferred that the region might have come under the pale of the Kushanas". From the inscriptions of the

Gupta age, it can also be deduced that "the Chota Nagpur region might have submitted to the might of the Guptas". After the Guptas, once again, there are very few records of the region until the medieval period (Ibid. *Ranchi* 1970: 41).

During the medieval period, the great kingdoms of North India had not been able to establish their sway over the Jharkhand region. This inaccessible tract "remained independent throughout the Turko-Afghan rule (i.e., 1206–1526 A.D.). The fortress of Rohtas was the farthest limit of actual penetration" (*Bihar District Gazetteers: Ranchi* 1970: 42). In 1585, the Raja of Kokrah (as Chota Nagpur was known to the Mughals) was reduced to a nominal suzerainty of Akbar by an expedition under Sahbaz Khan, and *Ain-i-Akbari* lists Kokrah as a part of the *subah* (revenue district) of Bihar. However, Kokrah "it seems regained independence during the disturbance that followed the death of Akbar in 1605 A.D." (Ibid. *Singhbhum* 1958: 72). There were repeated attempts by the Mughal empire to re-establish its token suzerainty but effective penetration was extremely limited. The "power of the Mughals was strictly limited in the hilly tracts of Chota Nagpur where their orders could not always be enforced" (Ibid. *Ranchi* 1970: 44).

In pre-colonial India, therefore, the tribal groups of south Bihar had been leading a life of relative seclusion with limited contacts with the rest of the world. They had developed a certain level of competence in crafts (such as weaving and pottery) and metallurgy, and had attained a certain level of agriculture. They were organised on the lines of jati or tribes; each tribe maintained its own socio-religious and cultural life, economic activity and identity, although a close parallel existed between the tribal and non-tribal communities.

In the pre-colonial period, powerful tribal kingdoms existed in which a majority of the tribals

> lived comfortable lives, at least until the colonial period, having control over large areas of land, having armies, an aristocracy, tax collection, and judicial system of one sort or another, and often enjoyed lucrative trading relations with merchants (such as the Banjaras) and Hindu cultivators in the plains. (Bates 1996: 109)

These tribal communities depended on an oral tradition and did not leave behind written records. The colonial administration and its historians, with their dependence on written records and material remains as testaments to the bygone era of glory, often had a tendency to regard such communities as 'backward' and at a lower level of historical evolution. The colonial sense of racial and cultural superiority and hierarchy added to the stereotyping of the tribal communities and regions as primitive (Bates 1996: 109–10).

Introduction of Permanent Settlement and colonial administration

Chota Nagpur region came under British rule in 1765 as a part of the grant of *diwani* rights over Bihar, Bengal and Orissa after the Battle of Buxar in 1764. After a series of military expeditions and with immense difficulty, tribal chiefs were compelled to pay a fixed revenue to the East India Company. These tribal chiefs were, by and large, treated as zamindars made tributary by conquest (Jha 1971: 72). In 1789, it was pointed out that the Permanent Settlement should not be extended to the Chota Nagpur area because revenue collections from this area were "more in the nature of a tribute than a revenue proportioned to the produce of the soil".[1] Nonetheless, in the late eighteenth century, the Permanent Settlement was gradually introduced in the region. This development was, perhaps, the single most important factor that integrated the Chota Nagpur region into the British Indian empire and the colonial mode of production. This integration was incomplete and was the main contributory factor which led to the pauperisation of the population (Jha 1971).

The first consequence of the introduction of a revenue settlement in the Chota Nagpur region was an increase in indebtedness and usury. The tribal peasants, who had been declared full proprietors of land, had the option of letting their lands be auctioned off to recover overdue revenue or borrowing to pay the increasing revenue demand. The indebtedness of the tribal landowners worsened as their land was auctioned off to recover revenue arrears or outstanding debts. Thus the Permanent Settlement "tried to suddenly substitute contract for custom" (Jha 1971: 72). The sum result of this policy was that

> indebtedness and the operation of usurious capital became one of the pivots around which the land market revolved, with the result that

> land started passing into the hands of moneylenders. With regard to *adivasi* peasantry, there was no room in the new provisions for the customary land rights of the original settlers and the village office-holders. These omissions in the new system gave the zamindars increased power to evict peasants from their lands. Customary law was abruptly replaced by contract law. (Devalle 1992: 66–7)

As the colonial administration entrenched itself, the increasing revenue demands began to affect all the rungs in the revenue-collection ladder and, gradually, the East India Company came to administer the region directly. With the establishment of judicial, military and administrative structures, the alienation of peasants' land and their exploitation continued, albeit under the garb of legality. The "introduction of an alien legal and tax system and administrative measures that aimed at attaining an effective system of economic exploitation" accelerated the process of land alienation and exploitation of the peasantry (Devalle 1992: 68).

The pressures generated by a modern and little-understood administrative system and new land relations[2] did not go unchallenged. The stirrings in tribal society took the form of revolts and disturbances in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the Great Kol insurrection (1831–32), the Santhal rebellion (1855), and the Birsa Munda revolt (1895–1900) are some of the most important. These uprisings and revolts, led by the traditional elite, were always agrarian in origin but often acquired social and religious overtones. They often began with attacks on government property, such as police stations and public offices, and involved attacks on the European population. However, the brunt of the tribal revolts against the introduction of the colonial system in the region was borne by the exploiter classes of landlords and moneylenders who were seen as local representatives of the exploitative system. "No matter which one of their three main oppressors—*sarkar, sahukar* or *zamindar* [government, moneylender or landlord]—was the first to bear the initial brunt of a jacquerie in any particular instance, the peasants often showed a remarkable propensity to extend their operations widely enough to include among their targets the local representatives of one or both of the other groups too" (Guha 1983: 26). The British administrative machinery always came down heavily on these revolts and insurrections and crushed them through sheer military superiority (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 49–50; Guha 1983).

The tribal unrest led to a series of legal enactments such as the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act (Act 2 BC, 1869), Chota Nagpur Landlords and Tenants Act 1879 (Rent Law) and Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act 1908 (Bengal Act 6 of 1908). However, by 1908, the process of land alienation was all but complete. The restriction on the transfer of lands from tribals to non-tribals in the Act of 1908 altered the situation only to the extent that some tribal farmers also became part-time moneylenders (Devalle 1992).

The new system of revenue, judicial, and police administration went on to transform these tribal areas. "The pervasive effect of a money economy, the creation of a market in land, the emergence of a moneylending landed sector and the development of chronic peasant indebtedness, were instrumental in producing fundamental transformations in agrarian economic relationships" in the region (Devalle 1992: 70). A new class of revenue intermediaries was established who, along with the Christian missionaries, went further to integrate the tribal areas into a modern system of administration. These social, economic and political structures, that emerged according to the logic of British policy in the tribal areas, went on to create conditions that suited the colonial state as well as the intermediaries but were against the interests of the tribal people of south Bihar (Ray 1972: 17–9).

The integration of the tribal region into the colonial mode of production resulted in a restructuring that simultaneously undermined as well as preserved the pre-colonial system, but in a distorted way. The tribal regions became a subordinate part of the colonial state and the economy. Part of the dynamics was geared towards ensuring availability of a labour force at a subsistence level. The Chota Nagpur region (especially Hazaribagh and Ranchi) emerged as the best places for recruiting labour for various economic enterprises in colonial India and abroad. One of the fundamental effects of the alienation of land rights of the adivasi peasants and their pauperisation was outmigration to the tea gardens of Assam, the fast developing coalfields of Bengal and Bihar, and iron-ore mines elsewhere in the Chota Nagpur region.[3]

Apart from the economic impact, the new economic and legal system also had socio-cultural repercussions. The large number of outmigrations from the region contributed to changes in its social profile. For instance, birth rates fell, which in turn helped

to change the proportion of population that was of tribal origin. Besides, the military operations launched to contain tribal protest movements generated a 'culture of repression'. Coercion, physical and institutional, was utilised, which resulted in "reproduction of indebtedness and extensive forced labour. [The state] also used native institutions and forms of social organization, putting them at the service of the colonial system" (Bates and Carter 1992).

An important feature of this process of integration of Jharkhand as a subordinate partner in the colonial enterprise was the creation of stereotypes of the tribes. The tribal people were seen as a socially undifferentiated mass that could provide labour and revenue. The process of integration was supposed to 'civilise' them. Also important was the reinforcement of the diku versus adivasi (outsiders versus tribal) contradiction. The series of legal measures, already mentioned, had this contradiction built into them. In a way, this official reinforcement of the perceived conflictual relationship between the adivasi peasants and the diku landlords and moneylenders contributed to identity formation in the Jharkhand region.

Role of Christian missionaries

Another important factor in the socio-cultural dynamics of the region was the role of the Christian missionaries. The German Evangelicals, Lutherans, Anglicans and Roman Catholics had established missions in this region, which are important even today. As a part of the larger colonial discourse (see chapter 2), the Christian missions attempted to carry the 'civilising' influence of the word of God and Western rationalist thought to these areas. These missions had an important impact because they introduced Western education and values to the population of the Jharkhand region. The result was, what has been termed, the 'deculturation' of the tribes (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 73–4). Ironically, some of these missionaries also subscribed to the adivasi versus diku dichotomy (see chapter 2).

Moreover, the Christian missions had considerable prestige amongst the people due to their social work. Consequently, they were able to persuade the population of the Jharkhand region to

take recourse to legal means for the redressal of their grievances. This contributed to the legitimacy of the colonial rule by containing violent revolt in the region. The influence of Christian missionaries had yet another impact. Those who had come in contact with the missionaries gained some level of Western education and began to understand the dynamics of the colonial state better. Consequently, there were efforts to generate greater social consciousness and organise the peasantry against exploitative economic relations (Devalle 1992: 73–4). This also contributed to the emergence of the Jharkhand movement. Nationalist thought in India had emerged due to the exposure of the Indian intelligentsia to Western education (see chapter 2), and a comparable pattern can be discerned in Jharkhand as well.

Industrial activity and large-scale mining

Another strand in the complex set of factors that encouraged and facilitated the growth of the Jharkhand movement was more economic than cultural. As has been discussed, the integration of the Chota Nagpur region into the colonial economic system was such that it was incorporated as a subordinate partner. The region supplied a large workforce for colonial economic enterprises, but the exploitative conditions in agriculture over time went from bad to worse. More and more tribal people found it difficult to earn their living from agriculture due to the increased pressure on land which had resulted from the alienation of agricultural land from tribal agriculturists to non-agriculturists such as moneylenders. The surplus labour, thus generated, began to look for other means of employment (Das 1992b: 403). This is where further exploitation of the region by industrial activity linked up with the already bad conditions of livelihood.

The large mineral deposits in the region inevitably led to large-scale mining of coal, iron ore, bauxite, limestone and other minerals.[4] All these minerals were important in the expansion of industry which had started in the second half of the nineteenth century. The working class created in the whole country by this expansion of industry also extended to the Jharkhand region that was by now established as the labour reserve of India. However, there was one important difference between many other regions

in India and Jharkhand. Because of the low levels of skills of the tribal population, most tribals found jobs in the newly emerging economic enterprise, especially the mining sector, at the lowest rung. They

> gained entry into the working class as lowly paid unskilled workers, on a hire and fire basis. Every technologically sophisticated industry has a core of highly skilled workers. In the case of Jharkhand this core has mostly been drawn from other regions of the country. The local people or the indigenous inhabitants, both tribal and non-tribal, have been relegated to a very special section of the proletariat: *khalasis*, peons, scavengers, etc. (Alam 1990: 158)

This resulted in serious socio-cultural implications. The dichotomy of diku versus adivasi was further reinforced. With the establishment of larger industries in the region, beginning with the Tata Iron and Steel plant in the early part of this century, increasing numbers of skilled and managerial workers started to migrate to the region. The diku, who thus far was seen as the exploiter in the agrarian sector, was now seen as someone who cornered the more lucrative jobs in the industrial sector as well, leaving only the lower-level jobs for local inhabitants (Alam 1990: 159). This factor further reinforced the growth of a Jharkhandi identity and movement.

It may be noted that popular perception towards outsiders who are able to secure better jobs in the industrial sector has not changed much. In the interviews with the general population of the region, during fieldwork in 1995–96, it emerged that they still complain about people from outside the region being able to secure better jobs. The only difference is that now the Jharkhandi population has also been able to acquire skills. So when an outsider gets a job instead of a local inhabitant, the Jharkhandis smell a conspiracy against them by the government of Bihar.[5]

Political Recourse

After Independence, despite the adoption of a welfare state in India, the problems of the tribals continued. The old problems of agrarian relations combined with those thrown up by a rapidly industrialising economy. The non-fulfilment of the aspirations of

people in general and the tribals in particular, generated a sense of disillusionment which went on to sharpen differences and the sense of identity in the Jharkhand region. The post-Independence State in India could not offer a radically different framework for providing solutions to the problems of the tribals due to its adoption of significant sections of the colonial tribal discourse and its emphasis on the same rationalist-bureaucratic model of administration and industry-led development (see chapter 2 for a full discussion of the colonial and nationalist discourses).

Moreover, a new type of political elite emerged in the Jharkhand region under a number of influences. The western-educated elites along with some concerned Britons, who had settled in the region, were the first to establish socio-cultural organisations which found instant support among the masses. The leaders thrown up by organisations such as the Lutheran Students Association and the Dacca Society can be called the first Jharkhandi leaders. These leaders were, largely, tribal youths who had been exposed to Western education and values by Christian missionaries (Sachchidananda 1972: 175). They did not start with a demand for administrative autonomy but with the aim of socio-cultural reform, not unlike the nationalist elite elsewhere in the country about a century earlier. The Jharkhandi community was created on the premise of the uniqueness of tribal culture and heritage.

Owing to the cultural premises of the Jharkhandi identity, the Indian state found it difficult to reconcile the demands of the Jharkhandi leadership with the nationalistic-rationalist-integrationist model of administration adopted in 1947. The Jharkhandi elite rejected the political space offered by the State in the form of a dichotomy between public and private, whereby the private is protected by way of constitutional provisions for the protection of the tribal population. The elite in Jharkhand saw the rules of political conflict resolution framed by the State as condescending benevolence.[6] They were (and are) conscious of tribal rights (as different from fundamental rights) and have demonstrated a capability of making shrewd and calculated moves to get the state to accept the validity of tribal rights. In places where such an elite was weak, national political parties exploited the plank of Jharkhandi identity to gain popular support (Ray 1972: 21–2). Led by the vocal, educated and richer sections of the tribal popu-

lation, the increased political activity in the tribal areas of south Bihar (with an aim of securing better avenues for the tribal population) politicised all questions related to tribal development. Politics has emerged as the principal avenue through which the tribal people look for solutions to the numerous problems they have been facing.

The Indian state was faced with an impossible situation where it could not ignore the Jharkhand movement due to the threat to its legitimacy from the political unrest born out of popular support for the movement. Besides, it could not accede to the demands of the Jharkhandi political groups, since such demands went against the grain of its rationalist-bureaucratic model of administration and development.[7] The Indian state, therefore, tried a number of avenues to resolve the politico-economic conflict. It tried open physical coercion to suppress the more manifest demonstrations as well as to marginalise Jharkhandi political opinion, with its emphasis on poverty alleviation and development. The efforts by the State to co-opt the Jharkhandi leaders were of limited use, as was the effort to arrive at a compromise formula. All such efforts by the State and dominant political opinion in India met with little or no success.

The Jharkhandi leaders adopted the State's emphasis on poverty alleviation and development as even more reason for administrative autonomy. The shift in the Jharkhand movement in the 1950s from a movement that commanded only a tribal following to one that sought to bring all the residents in the region under its scope, further strengthened its political standing. This shift helped the movement create its own political idiom such as the slogan of *Jai Jharkhandi, Jai Bharat* [Glory to Jharkhand, Glory to India] (*Election Manifesto of JMM, 1996* 1996: 1). This slogan represents the movement's ability to combine the nationalist and ethnic idiom, something that has not successfully been tried elsewhere. The Jharkhand movement has successfully translated the academic issue of the unproblematic coexistence of multiple political identities into a successful political idiom.

The dynamics of this interplay between the process of autonomous community formation and integrationist efforts by the Indian state must be examined before undertaking an analysis of the role that development issues have played in sharpening the identity.

Emergence and Growth of the Jharkhand Movement

There have been signs of vigorous political activity in the Jharkhand region, led by members of the traditional elite, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, manifesting itself in the spontaneous peasant uprisings and revolts against unjust agrarian relations (DN and GK 1989: 1505). Prominent examples of such unrest include the Chota Nagpur uprisings of 1801 and 1817, Barasat Birodha of 1831, the Kol insurrection in 1831–32, the Santhal Hul (1855–57) and the Munda Ulgulan (1895–1902) (Guha 1983: 2, 10).

The Dacca Students Union and Chota Nagpur Improvement Society

The beginning of a political movement in the modern sense of the term can only be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century. The Jharkhand movement and the related political developments began with the efforts of a student of St. Columbus College, Chaibasa—an institution that remains an important centre of tribal political activity in the region. J. Bartholmen[8] and some Anglican missionaries established the Dacca Students Union in 1910 to deal with the problems faced by poor tribal students. The early activities of this organisation were limited and ambiguous. It was a religious society, a cultural organisation, a discussion forum and students' union, all rolled into one. The Dacca Students Union organised religious discourses, discussions and seminars, staged plays, and represented the interests of the students. After the success of a play staged at Ranchi in 1912 to raise funds, a meeting of all Anglican and Lutheran students was called. In this meeting, some degree of consensus was arrived at about the aims of the organisation. Consequently, the area of its operation was increased. A branch was established at Ranchi under the supervision of Peter Heward. Under the leadership of Bartholmen and Heward, the Dacca Students Union was successful in mobilising tribal students to demand better educational facilities, economic avenues, job opportunities and so on (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 87).

When the question of constitutional reforms and protection and promotion of regional interests came up in 1918, the edu-

cated Christian tribals with active help and encouragement from the Anglican bishop of Ranchi, reorganised the union and renamed it the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society. This new body championed the cause of adequate protection of the tribal population and their cultural identity, and emphasised the pressing need to create avenues for rapid politico-economic advance of the region (Rekhi 1988: 135). In 1928, a deputation of this organisation met the Simon Commission and put forward what was, perhaps, the first demand for the creation of a separate province in the Jharkhand area (*Report, Indian Statutory Commission* 1930, 16, pt. 1: 432) (see chapter 2).

In 1928, the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society was renamed Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj. The membership of this organisation was limited to Christian and non-Christian tribals, and no non-tribal could become a member. The aims of the Samaj were: securing reservation for the tribals in government service and legislatures; employment for educated tribals; removal of backwardness in Chota Nagpur; and efforts towards finding avenues for the social, economic and political advancement of the Chota Nagpur area (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 87).

Though the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society and the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj were not very successful in mobilising the masses towards large-scale political activity, they represent the earliest political organisations in the Jharkhand region. The leadership of these organisations was unique in the sense that it was composed of a band of educated youth, inspired by ideas which were radical for their time, such as the creation of a new state. The period of the activity of these organisations, along with their radical and progressive ideas, also saw the emergence of social reform amongst the tribal population on the lines of the nineteenth-century Indian renaissance. These organisations harked back to the bygone golden age of the tribes and stressed the need to restore that past, although the need for eradication of undesirable features was also recognised. Educated tribal leaders such as Rev. Joel Lakra, Anand Mashi Topno, Theble Oraon, Paul Dayal and Bandi Oraon led the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj through its agenda of social reform (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 87).

The leaders of the samaj were dissatisfied with the urban and middle-class bias of their organisation and were eager to make it

a broad-based and unified platform for the uplift and advance of tribal society (Rekhi 1988: 135). They realised that unless the land problem was made a central plank of their activities, the peasantry could not be mobilised. Some of them, like Theble Oraon and Paul Dayal, disassociated themselves from the Samaj and formed the Kisan Sabha in 1931 (Sengupta 1982a: 30). The Kisan Sabha and the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj differed on the means to be adopted for the amelioration of the problems faced by the tribal population. The Kisan Sabha believed in radical action—mobilisation of the peasantry to force the government to act—whereas the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj sought deliverance through petitions and memoranda (Rekhi 1988). The difference in their approach was akin to that between the Moderates and Extremists in the Indian National Congress (INC) in the early twentieth century. Except for this major difference, the leadership of the two organisations (the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj and the Kisan Sabha) was similar, again like the INC leadership. Most of the leaders were well-educated, middle-class people who were acquainted with the areas outside the tribal belt and were of a rational bent of mind. They had little patience with the superstitions of the tribal population and regarded them as signs of backwardness (Jha 1972: 108–9).

One important feature that severely restricted the effectiveness of the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj and the Kisan Sabha was the fact that until the 1930s, both of them, in practice, were restricted to the Lutheran and Anglican Christians. The non-Christian tribal elements were not involved in their activities. In addition to these organisations, Baniface Lakra and Ignes Beck created the Chota Nagpur Catholic Sabha with the encouragement and support of the archbishop of Chota Nagpur. The proclaimed aim of this organisation was the promotion of socio-religious and economic advance, but it also took an active interest in the politics of the area. Ignes Beck and Baniface Lakra both contested the 1937 elections and were elected. The Kisan Sabha had also participated in the elections but was routed which resulted in its demise. Other tribal leaders, like the members of the Chota Nagpur Unnati Samaj who had also contested the elections, lost to the Catholic candidates due to the better organisation and popularity of the Catholic missions. Thus, the influence

of the Christian missionaries in the initial stages of the movement was sizeable (Jha 1972: 108–9).

The legislative experience gained by Ignes Beck during his term in the legislative assembly convinced him that pan-India parties like the INC would not be able to serve the interests of the tribal people. It was up to the tribals themselves to look after their own interests. He also realised that organisations with a narrow support base like the Unnati Samaj and the Catholic Sabha would not be able to secure their interests. He therefore aspired to create a pan-denominational and pan-tribal organisation in the Jharkhand region to effectively promote and protect the interests of the tribes and bring about social, economic and political advancement (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 157). Besides, the landslide victory of the INC in the 1937 elections convinced the tribal leaders of the need for denominational unity, and they decided to float a joint body to ensure it. Furthermore, the grant of political autonomy to the provinces and creation of the province of Orissa under the Government of India Act 1935 strengthened their resolve to struggle for a separate province of Jharkhand (Singh 1977: 320).

The Adivasi Mahasabha

The creation of a pan-denominational and pan-tribal body was a difficult task. Ignes Beck began by trying to convince the Chota Nagpur Catholic Sabha, after persuading the archbishop of Ranchi about the necessity of such an organisation. Then he tried to contact the leaders of other parallel organisations. After much debate, they agreed to form a temporary alliance to contest the ensuing Ranchi municipality elections. The preparations for this election were good, and success in the election prompted the leaders to maintain their alliance. This was the origin of the Adivasi Mahasabha created in 1938 which aspired to create a pan-tribal solidarity to solve tribal problems. A major plank of this organisation was to fight the *diku raj*[9] in order to improve the socio-economic and political conditions of the tribal people, the final goal being the creation of a separate province of Jharkhand (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 158).

At this time, Jaipal Singh[10] entered the arena of tribal politics. He was invited to chair the meeting of the Adivasi Mahasabha in

March–April 1939. Later he joined the Adivasi Mahasabha and became its president (Sachchidananda 1972: 175).

The Adivasi Mahasabha represented a substantial advance in the tribal politics of the Jharkhand region. It commanded a wider social support base and claimed to represent pan-tribal interests. This organisation was also supported by the Muslim League which, in the 1940s, was hoping to secure a corridor to connect East and West Pakistan via the tribal areas of south Bihar. Jaipal Singh and the Adivasi Mahasabha, however, did not become part of the mainstream nationalist politics. They supported the British war effort in World War II, and Jaipal Singh contributed in the recruitment of soldiers from the tribal areas with the fond hope that it would induce the British to look at their demand in a sympathetic manner (Rekhi 1988: 143).

Gradually, led by highly educated and articulate political workers, the Adivasi Mahasabha became a pan-Chota Nagpur movement holding sway in both rural and urban areas. It now demanded a complete separation from Bihar and the creation of a separate state. At times, it also became militant in pursuing its goals but lost popular appeal. It was defeated in the election to the Constituent Assembly in 1946 in which the INC performed well. It also lost the support of the Muslim League.[11] However, the mahasabha did enjoy the support of the Forward Bloc and the Congress Socialist Party (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 159). In the INC-dominated polity of the late 1940s, the mahasabha was more eager to acquire the support of the INC and demanded representation in the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee and the Congress Working Committee. This demand did not find favour within the INC. Further, the Adivasi Mahasabha demanded reservation of seats for adivasis in educational institutions and employment. This demand was extended to limiting all jobs in the industrial enterprises in the Jharkhand region exclusively for Chota Nagpuris (Sharma 1976: 41–2). The grievance that dikus were cornering all the plush jobs had, by now, become a political issue.

However, Jaipal Singh lost the 1946 election to the state legislature and, subsequently, he raised a militant slogan: "We shall take Jharkhand, Jharkhand is the land of *adivasi*s and non-*adivasi* exploiters will be turned out of the region even by violence" (Ibid.).

The social base of the mahasabha also changed over the years. Until the 1950s, the membership of the Adivasi Mahasabha was restricted to the tribals (Christian and non-Christian) of the south Bihar plateau. However, it was realised that if the support base of the movement was to be expanded and if the cause of a separate Jharkhand state was to be made a reality, non-tribal settlers in the region would have to be brought into the fold. This point of view was stressed by Justin Richard who organised the United Jharkhand Bloc in 1948 (Sachchidananda 1972: 175).

The realisation that the support of the non-tribal settlers was necessary to achieve the goal of a separate province was an outcome of colonial policy in the region. Alongside tribal outmigration as labourers, there was a sizeable migration of skilled workers into the region to work the rapidly growing industries. Soon these 'outsiders' who had settled in the region outnumbered the tribals by almost two to one.[12] The political importance of the in-migration is attested to by the fact that until the mid-1960s, the Statistical Diary (published by the government of Bihar), as also the 1951 Census, had a section on the new settlers in the region, classified by their respective places of origin. Further, the formation of a non-tribal organisation at Daltonganj to represent the points of view of non-tribals in the Constituent Assembly necessitated the broadening of the social base of the mahasabha (Rekhi 1988: 144).

The Jharkhand Party

It was not an easy task to accommodate the non-tribal population into the Adivasi Mahasabha because it meant the loss of a major plank of political activity and mobilisation. At the same time, without accommodating the non-tribal population, the prospect of a separate state of Jharkhand would have remained a mere dream. Consequently, in its 1949–50 session at Jamshedpur, the Adivasi Mahasabha decided to rename itself the Jharkhand Party (JHP) and extend its membership to the non-tribal population as well. It also succeeded in securing the support of the Chota Nagpur Separation League that was powerful amongst the depressed classes, especially the Muslim depressed classes and the Miners Association of Santhals (Sachchidananda 1972: 175).

The Jharkhand Party became a full-fledged political party from 1950. The identity of the Adivasi Mahasabha was also preserved by retaining it as a cultural unit of the party. Jaipal Singh became the president of the JHP and Ignes Beck was appointed its secretary (Rekhi 1988: 145). The creation of a new idiom by the Jharkhandi leaders was thus underway. They succeeded in retaining the essential premise of tribal heritage as the basis of their identity, and simultaneously managed to extend membership to the non-tribal elements.

The history of the JHP in some ways is the history of the translation of this essentially tribal identity into a regional identity that drew its uniqueness from the region's tribal heritage. Its cultural aspects were successfully construed to represent a geographical region instead of a specific social group. All the supporters of the JHP, tribal as well as non-tribal, would soon come to see the tribal premise and symbolism as representing them all. The JHP was able to bring together the various tribal denominations (Christian and non-Christian) within the region under a rather cohesive political platform (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 91). The Jharkhand movement gradually evolved into a full-fledged regional movement commanding support from all sections of the population.

The JHP was thus successful in combining aspects of tribal culture and broad-based politics to put forward a viable political agenda. It drew upon tribal symbolism by making the cock its symbol,[13] which was able to achieve a great appeal in the tribal belt. It was a simple symbol to be used in elections and yet had a potent message for the Jharkhandi identity. Furthermore, the JHP insisted that all tribal people were members of the party by birth and there was no membership fee for them (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 91). All this added to a larger mobilisation of the people.

The redefinition of the dikus and their relationship with the movement, by the leaders, ensured that the movement was strengthened by the support of the powerful moneylending communities[14] as well as the dikus. The traditional opponents of the tribals, i.e., the diku moneylenders and skilled industrial workers, were now willing to support the Jharkhand Party for the following broad reasons. First, the JHP now underplayed its anti-diku

stance because the political and monetary support of the dikus was essential if the JHP had to emerge as a viable political opposition to the INC. This made it possible for the diku elements of Chota Nagpur to join the party. Second, the diku moneylenders and landlords were also keen to extend their support to the JHP because it offered them an avenue to emerge as the political elite of the region. Such a position would enable them to protect and promote their interests. Without any political association with the JHP, the diku moneylenders and landlords would lack any political legitimacy in the region and would become the target of opposition from the JHP that was going from strength to strength. Finally, in the event of a separate state of Jharkhand, the dikus because of their better educational and financial status would catapult into the class of state-level and even the national-level elite. They would be the first beneficiaries of a newly created state in the Jharkhand region. Such a future necessarily required a gradual nurturing of their political association with the JHP.

The support of the dikus also expanded the geographical scope of the movement. From focussing on only the tribal pockets of south Bihar, the movement now began demanding the creation of a new province from the areas once under the Chota Nagpur Division, i.e., parts of the provinces of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.[15] The Jharkhandi leaders began talking of the entire region that was covered by the Chota Nagpur Division during the British rule as being within the geographical scope of their demand. They advanced economic, socio-political and cultural grounds for the creation of a new state. They argued that linguistically, culturally and ethnically the whole region was separate from other regions. An important basis for this demand was also that the entire region had been under a similar kind of administration during colonial rule. Consequently, there were similar problems born out of alienation of land, outmigration of the underemployed and unemployed labour, in-migration of skilled industrial labour, and incomplete economic integration.

The redefinition of the geographical and societal scope of the movement resulted in a large following for the JHP. This expansion of the social base of the movement was an astute move since the censuses of 1931 and 1951 showed that the tribal population

was no longer the largest group in the region as a whole. In fact, over the years, the tribals had become a minority in the region due to economic and concurrent demographic developments that have been discussed earlier. The movement for a separate Jharkhand state could not have lasted much longer without the inclusion of the various non-tribal groups.

The Jharkhand Movement after Independence

During the early 1950s, Jaipal Singh campaigned for the creation of a province in Jharkhand as the only solution to the region's problems. While endeavours were underway to woo the non-tribal residents of the Chota Nagpur area, simultaneously, the support of the tribals was sought under the slogan: *"Jharkhand abua, daku diku senoa"* [Jharkhand is ours and all robbers (exploiters) and dikus will have to leave] (Rekhi 1988: 149). This simultaneous wooing of non-tribals and opposition to them at the level of rhetoric marks a rather fractured ideology, but the first general elections in 1952 showed the JHP at the peak of popularity when it was able to secure large-scale tribal as well as non-tribal support.

Ascendance of the Jharkhand Party: 1950–early 1960s

After the first election, the JHP firmly established itself as the dominant political factor in the region. This strengthened the party's bargaining power and it began an intensive campaign for the creation of a province in Jharkhand. The culmination of this campaign was a well-attended demonstration by the tribals in 1955 at Ranchi and Dumka (in the Santhal Pargana district), before the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC),[16] The aim was to demonstrate the numerical support for a separate state. The SRC also had to face counter-demonstrations that supported the integrity of Bihar and were against all talk of creating a new state by hacking off a part of Bihar. The anti-Jharkhand camp accused the Jharkhandis of playing into the hands of foreign Christian missionaries (Rekhi 1988: 152).

The executive committee of the JHP submitted a memorandum to the SRC stressing the economic, socio-political and cul-

tural grounds for demanding the creation of a new state. It emphasised that linguistically, culturally and ethnically, the tribals were separate from the non-tribal people and, hence, geographical contiguity and administrative separateness was required (*Report, States Reorganisation Commission* 1955). Here, it must be noted that while the JHP was trying to mobilise the people on the issue of the creation of a new state of Jharkhand, and was eager to secure the support of both tribal as well as non-tribal population, its memorandum to the SRC emphasised the tribal aspects. This fractured approach was to lead to the loss of large-scale support in the years to come.

The SRC did not pay any heed to the cultural distinctness of the region and built its case on a purely linguistic basis of reorganisation.[17] Hence, the claim of the Jharkhandis for a separate state was rejected on the grounds that the multiplicity of tribal languages did not permit the creation of a new state in the Jharkhand region.

The failure of the Jharkhand Party in convincing the commission surely reduced its popularity. Gradually, the voters began to doubt the intentions of the party and its leaders, and a mood of disillusionment set in. In common perception, the slogan of Jharkhand began to be seen as merely a device used by the leaders to gain power (Sharma 1976: 38). Some allegations of corruption amongst the leaders also tarnished their popular image (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 49–50).

However, during the period 1950–57, the JHP was able to set the agenda of politics in the Chota Nagpur region. It had the ability to gather thousands of people for rallies and processions at a short notice due to the remarkable unity amongst its leaders, and the party virtually laid down the law for the region during this period (Singh 1977: 322).

This was set to change in the years that followed. The effort by the political establishment to blunt the edge of the Jharkhand movement yielded some results. It succeeded in dividing the movement, and as some respondents in the interviews in the region pointed out, the INC utilised the bait of ministerial office, financial gains and co-option to discredit the leaders amongst the masses.[18] The impact of the modest success of the development effort of the state in the region was also a contributory factor.

A phase of ideological and political confusion in the Jharkhand movement was soon to set in.

Decline of the Jharkhand Party

The last quarter of 1950s and the beginning of 1960s marked a gradual but decisive decline in the influence and power commanded by the JHP. A number of factors were responsible for this. Probably, the most important was the greater exposure of the people of the region to the government's development effort and the emerging split between the Christian and non-Christian sections of the tribal population (Rekhi 1988: 155). The ensuing competition for development resources fractured the unity of the tribal populace and sounded the death knell of the Jharkhand Party.

Many national parties such as the Congress, Jan Sangh (JNS), Swatantra Party (SWA) and the Communist Party of India (CPI) became active in the region. These parties were able to successfully poach a section of the non-tribal voters from the Jharkhand Party.[19] Moreover, the JHP leadership and the electorate—learning from the experience in other states where the INC was in office—realised that the interests of the tribals could be better served by representation in the government and the council of ministers. This necessitated supporting, joining, or aligning with the INC (Rekhi 1988: 155).

Additionally, the leadership of JHP was largely composed of urban professionals and it had few agrarian-based programmes. The urban bias of the JHP worked to its detriment, as did the poverty eradication thrust of public policy under the INC government. There was a need to provide a radical agenda to counter the growing restlessness of the tribal masses, and the JHP was not able to do so because of its links with the Janata Party[20] that represented the very class of people against whom it was to struggle, i.e., the zamindars and moneylenders (Rekhi 1988: 156).

The influence of the JHP also declined due to its failure to convince the SRC of the necessity of creating the Jharkhand state. Neither was the party able to prevent the redefinition of the boundaries of the region, by virtue of which a sizeable portion of the Jharkhand area (the districts of Manbhum and Purulia) was

given to West Bengal. This sparked a doubt in the ability of the leadership and led to internal dissension in the cadres of the JHP. Furthermore, the pressures of adequate funding for political activity had led the leadership of the JHP to align itself with the landlords and moneylenders and dikus. The party workers and the masses alike resented this.

Another factor that led to the loss of faith in the JHP was that government policies and development activities were benefiting the Christian sections amongst the tribal people to a greater extent than the non-Christian ones. The Christian population was "on the one hand being properly educated in the different Mission schools, and on the other, enjoying the benefits provided by the government for the tribals" (Das 1992a: 103). Thus, there was emerging a kind of a 'dominant section' within the tribal society. The Christian sections who had benefited from government policies were evolving into a new landlord class and elite and, consequently, were able to almost monopolise the seats in the legislative assembly.[21] This new elite was trying to divert the attention of the masses by pointing an accusing finger at the dikus, despite the fact that this newly emerging elite was actively co-operating with the erstwhile dominant classes of dikus, zamindars and moneylenders. The elite sections among the tribals were also trying to hijack the agenda of the creation of the new state of Jharkhand since these sections, due to their better educational and material standing, would have been the prime beneficiaries of any such change.

The growing complacency of the leadership and their drift away from the tribal people contributed to the downfall of the Jharkhand Party. There was a growing impression, something that continues till today, that the leaders lived in luxury in Delhi and Patna and the only time they remembered the poor tribal people of the area was when another election was round the corner (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 99). The failure of the JHP to locate itself in any effective way in the growing labour unrest and trade-union activities in TISCO and other industrial installations in the area also contributed to its loss of influence. After the 1957 election, the JHP's political activities started declining and the major outcome of this was the party's merger with the Congress soon after the 1962 elections.

Congress-JHP merger and the emergence of multiparty politics

The factors that were responsible for the decline in the influence of the JHP were also responsible for its merger with the INC in 1963 (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 102). Additionally, some other important factors catalysed the merger. The INC realised that it could not hope to gain a firm electoral presence in the Jharkhand region without the support of the tribal population that traditionally voted for the JHP.

The leaders of the JHP, on the other hand, believed that they would be able to pursue the cause of tribal welfare and a separate Jharkhand state more effectively if they joined the government. The creation of the states of Andhra Pradesh (1953), Maharashtra (1960) and Nagaland (1963) led the leaders of the JHP to believe that the goal of a separate state would be easier to achieve from within the INC. The earlier ally of the JHP, the Janata Party, had also drifted away after its merger with the Swatantra Party, and the JHP was looking for new alliances.[22] It was felt that the increasing influence of the Swatantra Party could be countered only with the help of the INC.

Moreover, tensions along religious lines were emerging amongst the tribal masses and it was thought that merging with the INC would contain them.[23] The seniormost leaders of the JHP agreed to the merger since they were sceptical about the Church's role in the politics of the region and wanted issues to be discussed and settled in a more overtly political arena.

All these factors together led to the merger between the INC and the JHP. The then chief minister of Bihar, Binodananda Jha, played a key role in persuading Jaipal Singh to endorse the merger agreement which was finalised on 20 June 1963. It stipulated that *(a)* a development board for Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana and parts of Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Shahabad districts would be established to accelerate agricultural, economic, industrial and general development of the region; *(b)* the INC and the Jharkhand Party would merge; and, *(c)* a subcommittee of the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee would be set up to coordinate political and organisational activities in the region (Rekhi 1988: 163).

The merger of the two parties was an act of political exigency and did not arise out of a common understanding on issues and goals. The merger survived only due to the political interests that it served. Hence, soon after the merger, several Jharkhandi factions within the INC emerged, which were led by various leaders from the Jharkhand region. One was led by Jaipal Singh, another by S. K. Bage, while a third faction wanted to revive the old JHP. Factionalism was also a result of the rise of younger and upcoming leaders who challenged the older ones. The merger itself was also considered ineffective because the general body of the JHP had not ratified it.[24] Jaipal Singh and others had announced the merger with the INC without consulting or asking for ratification of the general body of the JHP. It also gives an indication of the kind of personalised politics that existed in the region (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 99–100).

Most tribal people and leaders were unhappy with the merger, and the leaders who had agreed to it faced a lot of criticism. There were speculations that the Congress had bribed Jaipal Singh and that for a place in the government ministry, he had sold the cause of the Jharkhandis to the INC (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 100). N. E. Horo, a senior and respected leader of the movement, had opposed the merger along with his supporters. The Christian tribal section also saw this merger as a threat to their influence and was, therefore, not happy with it. The merger thus encouraged more factionalism than consensus (Jha 1972: 110–1).

One result of the merger was that the Jharkhandis got their first exposure to actual governmental office and day-to-day administration. Jaipal Singh was accommodated as a cabinet minister in the Bihar government in 1963 (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 100), and all the other important leaders were appointed to various district and state-level boards.

The Jharkhandi leaders, being in government, were also exposed to the logic of factional politics that operated in the INC. Along with this, factionalism within the Jharkhand movement itself threatened the movement to the point of disappearance in the following years. Far from promoting consensus, the merger encouraged further dissensions within the Jharkhandi groups as they tried to rally around the various chief ministerial candidates

in the hope of political office. S. K. Bage emerged as an important tribal leader and challenged the leadership of Jaipal Singh. Binodananda Jha, the erstwhile chief minister, was increasingly marginalised in the caste politics that ensued after the Kamaraj Plan (1967). Jha was forced to resign, and being out of power, it was no longer possible for his faction to keep the support of the faction led by Bage who defected to a more likely chief ministerial candidate, K. B. Sahay. Sahay in turn was willing to oblige this section against Jaipal Singh. After K. B. Sahay was installed as chief minister, the politics behind his election promoted further dissension in the Jharkhandi groups within the Congress. Sahay made Bage a minister against the express wishes of Jaipal Singh (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 101). Reacting to this, Jaipal Singh, at a press conference at Patna in 1964, declared that "none of the terms and conditions of Jharkhand-Congress merger agreed upon in June 1963 had been implemented by the Congress [Party] in Bihar though the Congress President and Chief Ministers of Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa were party to it" (quoted in Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 71).

On the eve of the 1967 general elections, the popularity of both Jaipal Singh and Bage was at a low ebb. The creation of Haryana and Punjab in 1966, but not Jharkhand, alienated the people further. Furthermore, Jaipal Singh and Bage, despite being in the government, had not been able to find adequate solutions to the problems of the tribal people.

Jaipal Singh's image as a great leader was fading, and he gradually became convinced that the powers that be would not yield control of the mineral rich area of Jharkhand. He thought that the time had come when the "days of begging" were over and "we shall have to act in Birsa Munda fashion to get our legitimate demands. Tribals should raise their heads against wrongdoers and if necessary use bows and arrows" (Singh 1977: 324). There was also some talk of reviving the Adivasi Mahasabha but nothing concrete took place. Shortly before his death in 1970, Jaipal Singh is said to have told N. E. Horo that he felt cheated by Jawaharlal Nehru who had not created a separate state of Jharkhand (Rekhi 1988: 167).

The exercise to co-opt the JHP and the willingness of its leaders to join the INC had far reaching consequences for the move-

ment. The JHP was seen as having sold out to the INC, a calamity from which the Jharkhand movement never fully recovered. During my fieldwork in 1996, many respondents quoted the JHP-INC merger as an example of the leadership being open to temptations, particularly that of ministerial office. Jaipal Singh, despite being a revered legend, was never forgiven for agreeing to the merger and the resulting fragmentation of the movement.

The supporters of the INC-JHP merger also began to have doubts about its effectiveness and necessity, and this gave impetus to the future course of action for the Jharkhand movement. Fresh efforts were made to revive the Jharkhand Party and get it recognised by the government and the Election Commission (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 101–2).

The 1967 elections thus marked the end of an era in Jharkhandi politics. Since 1938, Jaipal Singh and the JHP had dominated the politics of the area and had fought for a separate province of Jharkhand. They did have substantial political legitimacy in the region, but the movement was not organised enough in the rural areas. It was not really a mass movement and, hence, the struggle for a separate state did not involve the masses in enough numbers.

The splintering within the Jharkhandi factions had begun with the merger of the JHP with the INC, but after the 1967 elections it became overt. There emerged a number of groups, such as the Sahdeo group, Paul Dayal group, Lakra group and others. All such groups claimed to be continuing the JHP, and some of them also approached the Election Commission, unsuccessfully, to allot them the election symbol of the cock. Since these groups were not parts, or allies, of any major political party, they were treated as independents in the general elections (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 102–3).

These groups also realised that as long as there existed multiple groups who claimed to be working for the cause of a separate state of Jharkhand, none of them would be able to secure the effective support of the Jharkhandi people. Consequently, there began an effort towards unity. A conference of all the groups took place in November 1968 at Hazaribagh, where important Jharkhandi leaders such as David Munzmi, S. K. Bage, N. E. Horo and Simon Tigga were present. This conference highlighted the

sharp differences amongst leaders, and allegations were levelled against one another. Notwithstanding the differences and divisions, one unified party called the All India Jharkhand Party (AIJP) was launched, with Bagun Sumbrai as its president and N. E. Horo as its secretary. The 1963 merger of the JHP with the INC was declared invalid because the general body had not approved it (Rekhi 1988: 172).

However, the faction-based character of Jharkhandi politics could not be undone, and the new AIJP was soon divided into two internal factions under Horo and Sumbrai. After the 1969 split in the INC, the two factions supported different sections. The Horo-led faction aligned itself with the new Congress (R), and the Sumbrai-led faction supported the old INC and Jan Sangh. This incompatibility amongst the leaders of the AIJP continued until Horo resigned from it and revived the JHP. The latter party split again when the members belonging to the Santhal tribe, citing their grievance of under-representation despite being numerically larger than the Oraon tribe, split away from it to form the Hul Jharkhand Party.[25] Factionalism in the Jharkhandi politics reached a new peak when another party called the Bihar Prant Hul Jharkhand Party was formed to represent the interests of the Jharkhandis, which soon split further into two factions in 1972: the Progressive Hul Jharkhand Party (PHJP) and the Rajya Hul Jharkhand Party (RHJP). This division was, again, due to the same factors which had caused the AIJP to split; namely, personality clashes and political ambition amongst the leaders. The parties born out of the above splits and sub-splits had tribal particularism as their organising principle: AIJP was mainly supported by the Ho tribe with its headquarters at Chaibasa, the JHP was adhered to by the Munda tribe with Ranchi as their base, whereas the Hul Jharkhand parties were favoured by the Santhal tribe centred in the Santhal Pargana (Singh 1977: 324–6).

There was a widespread use of cultural factors by the leaders of these splits. They invoked ascriptive factors such as denominational,[26] historical,[27] cultural,[28] linguistic[29] and other differences to emphasise that the Jharkhandis were different from the rest of the Indian people. However, the leaders were not able to avoid the logical danger inherent in the use of such symbols—i.e., someone else might use the same symbolism in a more potent fashion

to split their new party. This is exactly what had been happening in Jharkhandi politics.

Factionalism became the hallmark of Jharkhandi politics after the JHP-INC merger. It was the singlemost important factor in the undermining of popular support for the Jharkhandi political parties and shifting of electoral support to INC, CPI and Hul Jharkhandi parties (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 104) (see chapter 6). This shift of popular support to the national parties also reflects a greater maturity of the electorate. The splintering of Jharkhandi parties also ensured that they lacked the organisational strength to expand their political base to rural areas. The Jharkhandi parties operated mainly in urban areas, and consequently, urban politics came to play an important role in the Jharkhandi movement.

The rise of urban and industrial factors in Jharkhandi politics

After 1967, a new factor emerged on the political horizon of the Jharkhand region. This was the formation of what can be called urban pressure groups and industrial political bodies such as the Birsa Sewa Dal (BSD), Krantikari Morcha and Chota Nagpur Parishad. Amongst these, the BSD was the most important. It was formed under the tutelage of Jaipal Singh by a group of young men, with the aim of acting as an independent tribal organisation working towards the unification and betterment of tribal society. It sought to secure better avenues and employment opportunities for the tribal population, the final goal being the creation of socio-political consciousness amongst the tribals. This section of the Jharkhand movement laid greater emphasis on social reform and social service (Sachchidananda 1972: 176).

The emerging divide between the Christian and non-Christian tribals reached a new high when the non-Christian tribals demonstrated before the Study Team of the Joint Committee of Parliament at Ranchi, in 1968. The purpose of this demonstration was to ventilate their grievances in front of the parliamentary committee and seek exclusion of Christian tribals from the Scheduled category. This divide soon took the form of a memorandum war between the two groups. Against such a social background, there emerged two sections in the Birsa Sewa Dal: one that saw similarities with the viewpoints of the missionaries, and the other that found greater concurrence with the arguments of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM). This created a very unstable leadership in the BSD and it soon split into two sections (Rekhi 1988: 174).

However, the two factions did manage to work together for some time. The BSD stood for the common problems faced by most tribal people and aimed at ameliorating their condition. It attempted to bring about greater awareness amongst the tribals and to reduce their sense of fear, inferiority and isolation. It sought to develop among the tribals a sense of belonging and pride for their tribal cultural heritage and tradition. The BSD also aimed at organising the tribals and using their collective strength to secure greater enjoyment of fundamental and democratic rights. The workers and students were organised to act as the primary political outfits. The Birsa Sewa Dal wanted to ensure that the tribals were given priority in employment in the government and private sectors and in admission to educational institutions. It sought a reduction in the drain of resources from the tribal belt and the restoration of land rights of the tribals. In reality, however, the activities of the BSD were limited to efforts aimed at ensuring that the tribals were given preference in jobs and admission to educational institutions. It also did some sloganeering for 'regionalisation of administration' (Rekhi 1988: 174–5).

The activity of the BSD can be roughly divided into two phases: the first phase (1967–69) was a rather extremist period in which violent means were advocated to secure the rights and better life prospects for the tribal people. During this phase, large processions, guarded by tribal youths with bows and arrows, were taken out and Birsa Day was celebrated as methods of mobilising the tribal masses. Slogans such as "झारखण्ड हमारा है, झारखण्ड लड़ के लेंगे, तीर के बल पर" [Jharkhand belongs to us and we will fight for it with arrows] were raised in the region. The political situation in the region became unstable, and law and order worsened. Some sections of the BSD also supported a Naxalbari[30]-type movement launched by ultra-leftist parties in south Bihar in 1969 (Sachchidananda 1972: 102).

The second phase of BSD activities began in the early 1970s when its extremist stance failed to generate any substantial following in the rural areas of the region and the influence of the leftist parties waned. It therefore decided to restrict itself to more constitutional methods to pursue its demands. At this stage, a conflict ensued between the two factions of the BSD, whereby a split seemed unavoidable. One section aligned itself to the AIJP which was now operating from Jamshedpur.

This was a period when the BSD was the most important organisation in Jharkhand politics, but it was not actually a political organisation. It was more of a cultural organisation aimed at social reform but also had some political overtones. Effectively, therefore, there was almost no political activity in Jharkhand during this period.

Splintered Jharkhandi politics and the national political agenda: 1969–80

During the period 1968–80, a number of Jharkhandi parties existed, all of which claimed to be carrying on the true ideals of the Jharkhand movement. All of them commanded varying degrees of support in their respective regions of operation, but none of them was strong enough to dominate the electoral agenda in the Jharkhand region as a whole. Consequently, these Jharkhandi political groups were collectively able to injure the prospects of the national and state-level parties, but were unable to offer a coherent alternative. This splintering resulted in extreme political instability in the Jharkhand region and Bihar. This phase also saw the increasing impact of national political events on the political dynamics of the Jharkhand region, and the electoral performance of political parties was influenced more by events at the national level than regional issues.

A coalition government was formed in Bihar in 1969 in which the Jharkhandi splinter groups participated as a unified 'Jharkhand Legislative Party' to extract concessions in exchange for support to the coalition government. The Jharkhandi parties had supported the government on the condition that a statutory board would be set up for Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana with complete powers to decide matters pertaining to areas such as,

education, employment, welfare of people, and development policies in the region. Their leader, N. E. Horo, briefly served as the education minister. However, no concrete policy emerged from this exercise because the government fell. In fact, the Jharkhandi groups were themselves responsible for its collapse because the Hul Jharkhand parties and some other minor Jharkhandi political groups crossed the floor while voting on the budget. Thereafter, a series of coalition governments followed, in which the Jharkhandi splinter groups participated to make them even more unstable. This trend continued until the next general election in 1972 (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 105–6).

The Jharkhandi splinter groups failed to extract any major concessions from these successive unstable governments despite the fact that the government depended on their support for survival. The prime reason for this was the lack of unity amongst the Jharkhandi splinter groups, which is quite typical of Jharkhandi politics. Hence, the popularity and influence of the splinter groups of the JHP, now carrying a plethora of names, each claiming to be different from the other, continued to decline. The confusion generated by the multiplicity of names and parties did not add to the prospects of a unified Jharkhand movement.

The electoral and popular support of the Jharkhandi splinter groups was further injured by the fact that just before the 1972 elections, the INC saw a surge in its popularity after India's victory in the 1971 war with Pakistan and the subsequent formation of Bangladesh, under the Congress government led by Indira Gandhi. This gave rise to a widespread feeling of nationalism which translated into substantial electoral gains for the INC in the entire country in the 1972 elections, and the Jharkhand region was no exception.[31]

The year 1972 can also be interpreted as a shift in the political dynamics of the Jharkhand region from regional politics to an all-India one. Some analysts have also seen this as the final proof of the Jharkhand region having been integrated into the larger political life of the country, with the implication that it repudiated the demand for the formation of a separate state of Jharkhand (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 180–3).

Nonetheless, it must be noted that the politics of the region has always been quite unpredictable, and the influence of an external

factor (the Indo-Pak War of 1971) may have yielded such a pattern only in the short term. The character of politics in a region cannot be altered by such short-term events. Moreover, to generate popular support, there was a heavy emphasis on region-specific factors (such as culture, tribal special needs and so on) by all political parties including the INC. Hence, the belief that the 1972 election had swept away all such particularistic factors is misplaced.

In the period of political turmoil that followed this election, the Jharkhandi groups and parties confined themselves to more passive forms of political activity. This was mainly due to the fact that the results of this election had made it more than evident that they did not enjoy the same political legitimacy and influence in the region, as they used to. Their noteworthy efforts towards the goal of a separate state of Jharkhand, at the national level, were confined to the presentation of two memoranda to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, by N. E. Horo, with little avail. At the regional level, the JHP continued its efforts to generate a political consensus towards a reorganisation of states by combining its efforts with those of the Maha Vidarbha Samiti and the Vishal Haryana Party. These three parties tried to organise a conference of all regional parties to draw up a plan for regional reorganisation based on an agenda of smaller states. According to these parties, larger states generated socio-economic imbalances, and hence instability, whereas smaller states were capable of achieving a balance in economic and political growth and ensured stability (Rekhi 1988: 183–4).

In the 1977 election held after the period of Emergency, the Jharkhandi groups again did not perform very well. Horo had supported the INC and was affected by the anti-INC sentiment and lost his own seat, although he was able to get two other members of his party elected to the state legislature. On the other hand, the AIJP despite having supported the Janata Party also did not do well. Clearly, the politics of the Jharkhand region had slipped out of the control of the Jharkhandi groups.

However, the arguments about the death of regional politics in Jharkhand cannot be conclusive. Just as it cannot be deduced from the results of the 1972 election that national politics had come to stay in the Jharkhand region because external factors

were at play, similarly, not much can be deduced from the results of the 1977 election. The imposition of Emergency in 1975–77 had alienated many people from the INC in the short term.

By the time midterm elections were held in 1980, all other Jharkhandi groups had disappeared over the past decade, and only the AIJP led by Bagun Sumbrai and the JHP led by Horo remained. However, both performed badly in the election. The JHP made little effort to organise and mobilise people in the region and restricted itself to submitting memoranda and petitions. The Indian National Congress (Indira) (INCI)[32] had rebounded as the leading and dominant party.

Other parties such as Janata Party (JP),[33] CPI and BJS also picked up some of the lost influence of the JHP, but none of them could gain the past pre-eminence enjoyed by the JHP. The JP was unable to cash in on its pro-poor image due to the factional politics that plagued it. The Congress (I) was the prime gainer in this state of affairs.

The issue of Jharkhandi identity and the creation of a separate state still enjoyed a considerable appeal with the masses. However, due to the multiplicity of parties, no single party, and that included the JHP and AIJP, had the political potential to exploit this issue. Failures to derive any substantial gains on this front made the bona fides of its leaders suspect (Sachchidananda 1972: 176). The electorate lost their faith in the leaders and were unwilling to reinvest all their support in the Jharkhandi groups. By the early 1980s, the character of the Jharkhand movement, as has been discussed below, was set to change yet again. Development problems, that had become acute in the region, sidelined the issue of autonomy.

Marxist, radical and leftist components of Jharkhandi politics

The leftist industrial and urban pressure groups such as the BSD had already emerged in the late 1960s as a component of the larger Jharkhand movement. This increasingly leftist orientation of the Jharkhand movement was helped by the weakening influence of the Jharkhandi parties in the region. In the early 1970s, however, the independent Marxist and leftist organisations that

had not found much appeal with the masses until then, moved in to fill the political vacuum. Land-related problems played a major role in helping the Left make inroads.[34] Related issues such as the growing unemployment amongst the tribal youth due to continuing alienation of agricultural land and poor job prospects in the urban industrial complexes also played an important role. With the growth of industrial enterprise in the region, an unprecedented in-migration of non-tribal staff into the more specialised jobs in industries like Bokaro Steel plant, Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) in Ranchi, Tata Steel plant, and others occurred. This made competition for jobs stiffer for the tribal and local population. Moreover, the speed of development activity in the tribal region was very slow in relation to the aspirations of the younger generation of the tribal people. The combined effect of these factors increased the appeal of radical political positions.

The Naxalite movement and Left politics altered the character of Jharkhandi politics to a considerable degree. Left politics, which had originated in the industrial centres of the region, gradually began to influence tribal politics as well. Affected by more radical ideas, the tribal organisations and other forums on the political landscape of the region began to lay greater stress on the political education of the political workers and the people at large. Political education included the leftist analysis of land relations and other agrarian issues. All this meant linking up local issues with all-India politics, violence and often militancy. There was also an emphasis on greater and better political organisation of the people of the region. Finally, the national Left parties saw the concept of tribal autonomy as different from that of a separate state (Singh 1977: 323–4).

With the greater emphasis on tribal land relations and the general exploitation of the tribals, the demand for a separate state was pushed into the background, and the foreground came to be occupied by the demand to end all kinds of exploitation—industrial and agrarian. Political activity now centred on securing more opportunities for the tribals in terms of seats in educational institutions and jobs in industrial enterprises, as also restoration of alienated land. All these new ideas that were introduced in the region had some attraction for the Jharkhandi population because they seemed closer to their everyday existence.

Left politics entered on to the stage of Jharkhandi politics at the end of 1960s and in early 1970s, through the unlikely avenue of caste politics of Bihar. Binod Bihari Mahto had emerged as an important Kurmi leader in Dhanbad and Hazaribagh (both districts had shown little support for Jharkhandi politics before this time).[35] He had established a social reform organisation to work amongst the Kurmis, called the Shivaji Samaj. It sought restoration of land which had been alienated during the process of industrialisation to the Kurmis, and highlighted the backwardness of the region. For this purpose, an alliance was forged with the Santhal population of the area that came to be known as the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). In neighbouring West Bengal, the influence of the Left parties had grown, and A. K. Roy and Immanuel Hai Khan wanted the communities of the Jharkhand region to join the struggle and fight for a separate Jharkhand. The Marxist Co-ordination Committee (MCOR) headed by A. K. Roy also supported the JMM. Therefore, under the leadership of the JMM and the MCOR, the Jharkhand movement was successful in drawing in the support of sizeable sections of the tribal and non-tribal population. The major leaders of the JMM were Shibu Soren, B. B. Mahto and Sadananda Jha. Under their leadership, the JMM activities were a mix of radicalism, social reform and cultural revivalism (Singh 1977: 329).

On the socio-cultural front, the JMM organised a series of reform movements. It started a campaign to rid the region of the habit of liquor consumption since this habit was seen as the root cause of indebtedness and consequent alienation of land. It also repeatedly emphasised the tribal nature of the Jharkhandi politics and one of its most used slogan was '*Kallali toro, Jharkhand choro*' [Break the bottles (of liquor), leave Jharkhand]. The first part of the slogan was aimed at the local population and the second part at the diku inhabitants of the area. This campaign forced the state government to declare prohibition in the district of Dhanbad in 1976, causing considerable loss of revenue to the state exchequer. The JMM also led a frontal assault on illiteracy. It secured funds for a literacy programme through donations collected from the masses, and opened night schools. These night schools served the twin purpose of imparting knowledge about the 3Rs (reading, writing and arithmatic) and facilitating political education (Singh 1977: 329).

The JMM realised that the government credit institutions were not sufficient and that there was a need for credit institutions in the villages. It therefore began to implement an indigenous scheme of establishing *golas* (banks) for grain in each village from which needy peasants could borrow grain (or cash) at a nominal rate of interest. The JMM also tried to educate people against extravagant weddings and promoted collective farming. Another feature of the JMM's agenda was its efforts to revive old traditions. It revived tribal people's courts[36] where cases could be speedily tried and justice delivered. In these courts, a number of local landlords were tried and punished (Singh 1977: 193–4).

In the area of agrarian reform, the JMM resorted to direct action. It began a campaign to recover alienated land and organised a series of raids to forcibly harvest crops from the alienated fields all over the region, especially in the districts of Giridih, Dhanbad, and Hazaribagh. Consequently, there were large-scale clashes and disturbances during the harvests of 1974–75, and the movement spread to many areas of the region. This often led to situations in which the landlords retaliated with firearms and the peasants responded with tribal weapons. The landlords and moneylenders adopted the tactics of eliminating the leaders of the JMM and the MCOR with the help of police and government officials. A. K. Roy and B. B. Mahto were arrested on false charges, and Sadananda Jha was killed by antisocial elements. These events sparked off the wrath of Jharkhandis, they fought pitched battles with the police parties and a number of people lost their lives. This period thus witnessed widespread violence and anarchy (Singh 1977: 195).

Efforts were also made towards political mobilisation on the basis of leftist ideology. The JMM and the MCOR established the Jharkhand Alliance between the workers and peasants since, according to them, a 'Jharkhandi' was anyone who worked, and a 'diku' was anyone who exploited others. The effort was to unite all 'Jharkhandis' against all 'dikus' to ensure the creation of a separate state of Jharkhand. The JMM led the alliance with the slogan "Jharkhand, *Lalkhand*" [Jharkhand is a red (implying communist) area]. Processions and rallies organised under the joint leadership of the JMM and the MCOR soon drew up to fifty thousand people, and the demand for a separate Jharkhand

state again became stronger. These demonstrations were primarily aimed at bridging the differences between the workers and peasants so that a Lalkhand (communist area) could be established in a separate state of Jharkhand. Every year, February 4 came to be celebrated as Jharkhand Divas (Jharkhand day), marked by large processions of armed peasants and workers. The mass following that the JMM had managed to generate led to its becoming more assertive (Devalle 1992: 170–1).

The railway strike of 1974 and the nationalisation of collieries further provided a distinct left leaning to the Jharkhand movement. Under the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi, a large number of workers, tribal and non-tribal, were dismissed from work for minor or construed misdemeanours. This encouraged their participation in trade-union politics and, in turn, led to further dismissals from work. The leaders of the movement took part in all the democratic programmes of Jayaprakash Narayan under the banner of Janvadi Sangram Samiti (Committee for Democratic War) but retained their political identity in the form of Jan Sangharsha Samiti (Committee for People's Struggle). Faced with a challenge to the legitimacy of the regime, the Indian state came down heavily on the dissenters, and leftist politicians including the Naxalites were suppressed. There was widespread coercion by paramilitary forces and the Bihar military police, and the movement was crushed. Many of the Jharkhandi leaders like Shibu Soren and B. B. Mahto were arrested under the provisions of preventive detention. Thus, this movement became a part of the larger movement that led to the proclamation of the Emergency in 1975. The Jharkhand movement was undermined during the period of Emergency from 1975 to 1977, in keeping with the suppression of almost all non-Congress political activity during this period (Das 1975: 384).

In a way, the militancy that had become a hallmark of the Jharkhand movement in the 1970s was partly responsible for the collapse and temporary disappearance of the movement. Its extremism in this phase may have been successful in mobilising a large number of people in the short term, but it also invited State repression. The leftist points of view may argue in terms of an imminent revolution, but any movement that depends on mass following instead of a devoted cadre is not likely to succeed if it

invites the full repressive force of the law-enforcing machinery on itself. However, the contribution of this phase of the movement to the cause of a Jharkhandi identity was important because it was for the first time that stress was laid on schooling and political education of the people at large, as well as on explaining the oppressive land relations.

Simultaneously, the JMM supported the mainstream development programmes such as the 20-Point Programme launched by the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, and was successful in securing the support of the Hul Jharkhand parties. Thus, the JMM also tried to incorporate some degree of broad-based politics in its activities.

In 1976–77, efforts were made to revive political activity in the Jharkhand region. In this phase, the surviving leaders of the Jharkhand movement formed a united front which included the JHP, the MCOR, the JMM, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI-ML), the Birsa Sewa Dal, the Jharkhand Muslim Morcha, the Hul Jharkhand Party and the Revolutionary Socialist Party. The united front drew upon the slogan of the national movement and proclaimed "Give me your blood and I will give you freedom" (Rekhi 1988: 198).

In this phase, the Jharkhand movement focused on the mobilisation of the population of the area, political efforts to pursue the goal of a separate Jharkhand state, and efforts to fight the economic exploitation of the people of the area. The movement now aimed to secure urgent public policy measures to reduce the suffering of the masses, pending the creation of a territorial state of Jharkhand. It tried to generate a mass movement based on processions, blockades, gheraos, public meetings, propaganda, sit-ins, and demonstrations.

These methods of mass mobilisation were used to reclaim land for cultivation (by cutting forests), to oppose the new public-sector enterprises being set up in the region, to oppose the official forest-produce purchase policy, and to struggle for restoration of alienated land rights to the tribal people. Under the leadership of the united front, this phase of the movement was able to secure participation by a sizeable population. Once again, it faced severe repression by State agencies. At the same time, the State authorities tried to control the popular wrath with the help

of public policy measures. They emphasised the need for integration of the tribals and established autonomous development bodies for North Chota Nagpur, South Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana. Members of the Janata Party (which was in power at the state and national levels), and not the local leaders, headed these bodies. Thus, a combination of integrationist and repressive measures was adopted to quell the tide of the Jharkhand movement during this phase (Rekhi 1988: 199).

At this juncture, support for the Jharkhand movement came from an unexpected quarter. On 21 March 1979, the tribals living in north Bihar formed an organisation called Uttaranchal Bharatiya Samiti. Despite the fact that the area of their residence did not fall within the territorial scope of the demand for a separate state of Jharkhand, this organisation opposed the exploitation of the tribal population by landlords, and police atrocities. They put forward a charter of thirty demands at a rally and one of these demands was the creation of a separate state of Jharkhand. Support for the Jharkhand cause also came from another unexpected quarter. Some landlords, despite belonging to the class which had tried its best to fight the movement during the last few years, renewed their support for the JMM.[37] The support of these groups added legitimacy to the movement. The Jharkhand movement had now found support not only in the areas outside the territorial boundaries of the proposed state but also in the quarters that had been sceptical. This gave the movement a slightly larger base and a considerable degree of social and political legitimacy (AS 1979: 650).

While the movement was gaining strength from the increasing support base, other factors were at work which were to weaken it. The beginning of the 1980s saw the emergence of cracks in the Jharkhand Alliance that had earlier put forward ambitious programmes for forging unity between the peasant and workers to widen the social base of the movement. The rift began with a personality clash between leaders like Shibu Soren, B. B. Mahto and A.K. Roy, though the issues involved were ideological in nature. According to Marxist leaders like Roy, the workers in the industrial towns like Jamshedpur, Dhanbad, Bokaro and others ought to take up the leadership of the movement. On the other hand, Jharkhandi leaders like Soren saw the workers as becoming

increasingly middle class, and therefore, in their view, the peasantry was the class which had to wear the mantle of liberating Jharkhand from the clutches of the landlords and the dikus (Dhar 1984: 1139).

Soon, this rift took the form of suspicions in the minds of the rural population about the workers. There began a re-emergence of slogans calling for driving out all dikus, including workers. It acquired an ideological undertone of Marxists versus the rest.

Faced with widening differences with its leftist allies, the JMM entered into an electoral alliance with the Congress (I) for the 1980 midterm polls. It served the interests of the INCI to forge an electoral alliance with a party that had a regional presence and at the same time bolstered its image as a pro-tribal party. It also helped the INCI in neutralising the influence of leftist parties led by leaders like A. K. Roy. This new alliance with the INCI encouraged Soren to withdraw the more militant movement in the region. The violent activities of the JMM over the past few years had led to a massacre of people in many villages by the law-enforcing agencies. This also influenced Soren's decision to reduce the extremism of the movement, and he became almost Gandhian in his approach. The movement became quite low-key and fell into disarray due to another external factor. Huge amounts of development funds started to flow into the region under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), in the form of development grants, foreign project assistance and relief operations.

The overtly Marxist phase of the movement thus practically ended with the electoral alliance between the JMM and the INCI in the 1980 elections. A formal split between the leftist and Jharkhandi political groups was to follow soon.

The Jharkhand movement: Recent patterns

The cracks that developed in the Jharkhandi movement by the early 1980s were to lead to further splits in the movement in the years that followed. The split in the Jharkhand Alliance came into the open during the first central conference at Saraidhela, Dhanbad district, in January 1983, presided over by Binod Bihari Mahto and inaugurated by its secretary, Shibu Soren. There was competition between the two broad Jharkhandi political factions

over the sharing and control of symbolic resources. The differences between the two factions were on the issues of the JMM's relations with the MCOR, the use of the red flag, and the Bihar Colliery Kamgar Union (BCKU). Soren emphasised the necessity of maintaining the separate political identity of the JMM, whereas the leftist factions argued that the JMM had become a handmaid of the Congress (I). The leftists, therefore, wanted to maintain and strengthen the Jharkhand Alliance between the JMM and the MCOR (Dhar 1984: 1139).

The two groups also differed over the dual membership of the BCKU and the Jharkhand Mazdoor Sangh. Soren and his groups were accused of supporting the exploiters' party, i.e., the INCI, with the help of the BCKU. They were also accused of corruption. The leftists also argued that due to the close relationship between the JMM and the INCI, the exploiters were almost glorified and, therefore, the workers and not the peasants ought to lead a joint Jharkhand movement, with guidance from Roy. Soren, on the other hand, emphasised the final goal of a separate Jharkhand state, and which section led the movement was of little consequence to him. Soren, thus, accepted the alliance with the INCI as a useful short-term strategy.

Soren saw the 1983 conference as the perfect opportunity for launching the JMM as a new political party and did not see it as a breach of the political alliance with the MCOR. It was also felt that there was a need to clarify the separate identity of the JMM, and therefore, a new constitution was adopted on 6 April 1984 (Dhar 1984: 1139). This constitution envisaged the role of the JMM as the leader in the all-round fight to drive out the dikus.[38] The relationship between the tribals and non-tribals in Jharkhand were again redefined conceptually, which was essential if the JMM was to participate in electoral politics. The changes in the demographic profile of the region had made the tribals a numerical minority. Consequently, electoral support of only the tribals (even if seen as a monolithic political group, which they are not) was not sufficient to secure enough votes.

With the participation of the JMM in electoral politics and the effort of some of its MLAs to become ministers, all scope for political cooperation with the MCOR ended because Roy and his supporters considered this unacceptable. The movement again

became confused and divided. The Jharkhand Alliance split into the pro-right JMM led by Shibu Soren, Suraj Mandal and Hakim Prasad, and the pro-communist MCOR led by B. B. Mahto and A. K. Roy. Later, the JMM also split into two factions, each led by Soren and Marandi, respectively. The JHP had almost disappeared and N. E. Horo was the only candidate to contest and win the election in 1984. However, Soren emerged as the undisputed mass leader in the region, with all others coming after him. The JMM maintained close alliance with the Congress (I), and Soren, probably, remains the symbol of the articulation of the aspirations of the masses.

During the mid-1980s, once again, the Jharkhandi leaders realised the necessity of joint action if meaningful political presence was to be maintained. Consequently, in 1987, sixty-two cultural and political organisations such as the JMM (Soren), the JMM (Marandi), and a host of smaller organisations forged the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee (JCC) to lead a unified agitation for realising the dream of a separate province of Jharkhand. The JCC was soon faced with a threat to its survival from a students' body formed in 1988, called the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU). The AJSU, since its inception, had been the most vocal constituent of the JCC. It had been giving out calls for blockading of all mineral mining and transportation in the Jharkhand region[39] to force the Union government to agree to the formation of the state of Jharkhand as well as to secure a better policy response to the development problems of the region. However, the response from the other constituents of the JCC had been very varied.

The JMM continues to exist divided into two groups: the Marandi and Soren groups. They exercise marginal roles in the Parliament and the state legislature along with other, even smaller, Jharkhandi parties. One instance of such a role was their support to the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government in Bihar in 1997–98. In exchange for their support, the Bihar Vidhan Sabha led by the RJD adopted a resolution recommending to the Central government that a separate state of Jharkhand must be created.[40] Since it is the prerogative of the Central government to create new states, the resolution served only political and symbolic functions. The Jharkhandi groups, once again, failed to

capitalise on one of the rare instances when they actually had a position of influence. Instead of pressurising the Bihar government to transfer actual powers[41] to the JAAC created in 1994, the Jharkhandi leaders sought to play to the gallery with political and symbolic gestures. Thus, the history of the Jharkhand movement has been a chequered one. Like all movements seeking political recognition, it has had its peaks and troughs. Perhaps, it might have attained success in securing a new state much earlier if it had not been plagued by divisiveness, lost opportunities, ideological fluidity and inept leadership.

Notes

1. L. S. S. O'Malley, *District Gazetteer: Manbhum*, Calcutta, 1911, quoted in Jha (1971: 72).
2. Similar situations existed in the other tribal areas as well as in large parts of rural India. However, the case of the tribals was worse since they were quite different from the rest of the rural population, in terms of the nature of their interaction with the rest of the people.
3. The migratory indentured labourers for Mauritius and Fiji were also recruited from this region in large numbers (Bates and Carter 1992).
4. The first coal mine in the region was started in 1775, which was followed by a number of collieries such as Messers Bengal Coal Company which was established in 1843. The establishment of Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO) in Jamshedpur in 1907, however, marked the beginning of large-scale industrial activity (Das 1992b: 403).
5. Interviews with a casual factory worker (educated till matric level) in the industrial suburbs of Ranchi and a foundry worker (holder of a diploma from a polytechnic institute) in Chaibasa, in January 1996.
6. Jaipal Singh's speech in the Constituent Assembly on 24 August 1947, see chapter 2.
7. The Indian state is unable to accede to the demands of cultural identities for political recognition because it seeks 'objective' and 'secular' criteria for any political reorganisation (although some cultural identities in the Northeast have succeeded in gaining political recognition with the creation of states such as Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland).
8. It has not been possible to establish beyond doubt the origin of this person. Most probably, he was a tribal student of the Anglican missionaries at Chaibasa. The other important person who was active in the establishment of the Dacca Students Union, Peter Heward, seems

to have been one of the many sympathetic Britons settled in the region, possibly a missionary.

9. Diku raj means rule by outsiders. The links between the tribals and exploiters from outside—first in the guise of moneylenders who became landlords and, later, as skilled workforce in the industrial enterprises—has been discussed earlier.
10. Jaipal Singh was born at Takara, a village near Ranchi, in a *pahan* (priest) family of the Munda tribe. He was adopted and converted to Christianity by an Anglican missionary. He was educated at Oxford where he excelled in sports and obtained a 'Full Blue' in hockey before going on to captain the Indian hockey team in the Amsterdam Olympics in 1928. His achievements in foreign lands convinced the tribals of their own abilities, and he soon came to acquire a legendary stature. He came to be looked upon as an incarnation of Birsa Bhagwan (Birsa Munda, leader of the tribal revolt in the nineteenth century) and was later accepted as Marang Gomke (Supreme Leader) by the tribal people.
11. By this time, the future administrative arrangements for India had been decided, and the Muslim League's demand for a corridor to connect East and West Pakistan, passing through the tribal areas of Bihar, had been rejected.
12. The demographic profile of the Jharkhand region in 1951 has been discussed in chapter 4.
13. The cock was a revered tribal symbol since it was not only the favourite sacrificial animal but also signified the dawn of a new day as well as the creative God and His all pervading power.
14. The financial position of the JHP improved with the contributions from the newly joined diku landlords, moneylenders and traders (since no membership fee existed for tribal members to join the JHP). Consequently, the JHP was able to extend its area of operation and found a sympathetic audience in other areas of the region that had been facing similar problems.
15. The area demanded by the Jharkhandis now included more than thirty districts between the four states, including the eighteen districts of present-day Jharkhand. These eighteen districts were until recently in south Bihar and were created from the earlier nine districts comprising that region.
16. The States Reorganisation Commission was appointed in 1953 and reported in 1955 on the principles of reorganisation of the states of the Indian Union.
17. Chapter 7 discusses in detail the commission's approach towards the creation of a separate state in the Jharkhand region.
18. Interview with a local schoolmaster and BJP political activist at Ranchi in January 1996.

19. The changing electoral support for JHP and other Jharkhandi groups is discussed in chapter 6.
20. This Janata Party in Bihar was different from the national-level Janata Party that was formed by an alliance between Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), Indian National Congress (Organisation) (INC (O)), and Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS) in 1977. The Janata Party in Bihar was predominantly a party representing the landed interests and had come to develop close links with the JHP. The JHP cherished its links with the Janata Party because the landed section offered it substantial financial support.
21. On account of the emerging dominance of the Christian tribal sections, two early organisations called Sudhar Sabha and Parha were formed in 1947–48 with Theble Oraon and Somnath Oraon as their presidents, respectively. Their purpose was to organise the non-Christian tribals and they had a distinctly anti-Christian thrust. These organisations did not last long but Parha was revived in 1963.
22. Earlier talks for an electoral alliance with the INC had broken down because the JHP was not ready to concede any share in the reserved seats in the area. The INC, on the other hand, did not want to let the JHP influence the non-reserved seats in the region because such a move would have let down some members from the area who had taken considerable electoral risks by joining the Congress Legislature Party.
23. Interdenominational and intertribal rivalries had always plagued Jharkhandi politics, and the JHP itself was formed to contain such divisions. By this time, individual leaders had started to patronise their own denomination/tribe against the other, in which the support of the Church was beginning to acquire a central role. A number of missionaries were also tribal leaders whose congregation provided a captive vote bank to certain sections of the leadership. Allegations were also made that the Church was investing large amounts of money in the politics of the region to empower certain sections of the leadership (Vidyarthi and Sahay 1976: 100).
24. Most of the electorate of tribal Bihar did not know of this merger until the next election in 1967. They came to vote for their preferred JHP only to discover that it had merged with the INC.
25. The Hul Jharkhand Party was named after the Santhal insurrection of the nineteenth century. In local parlance, this insurrection was termed Hul.
26. Christians versus non-Christians; Santhals versus Hos versus Mundas versus Oraon, and so on and so forth.
27. Invoking the spirit of the Santhal rebellion, by Jaipal Singh and, later, by the Hul parties and many others.

28. Invoking of the tribal totems and symbols such as the cock, the bow and arrows, and so forth.
29. There are as many languages in the Jharkhand region as tribes, although they are still evolving into written form. This has led some people to comment that they are not languages but mere dialects.
30. The Naxalbari movement was an ultra-left movement that held sway in most of the backward parts of eastern India in the late 1960s and 1970s. The subscribers to this movement and its philosophy were of the opinion that 'class enemies' (implied landed interests, money-lenders and entrepreneurs, and government officials who seemed to be collaborating with these people) should be dealt summary justice in people's courts (which were often manned by the cadres of the movement). They emphasised the idea of *khatam* (to finish/end), implying that all such people must be killed instantly.
31. This also supports the contention elsewhere in the study that the Indian national identity and 'subnational' political identities, that are equally strong, if not stronger, may not always be at cross purposes.
32. The INCI had emerged after splits in the original INC. However, in the electoral records, the acronym INCI has been used only in the 1980 election. For all other elections, INC has been used to refer to this party despite the fact that it retains the suffix 'Indira' because no other significant party of a similar name exists.
33. The national Janata Party, not the one that operated in Bihar in 1950s and the 1960s.
34. As discussed earlier, the JHP had never succeeded in creating a stable political base for itself in the rural areas of the region. Therefore, it had played down the issue of land alienation and other land-related problems, and this was exploited by the emerging leftist organisations.
35. The socio-economic conditions of the kurmis (a caste group) and the tribal population being very similar, the Naxalite elements had been successful in forming joint fronts of Kurmis and tribals to struggle against their common exploiters.
36. This practice of people's courts was borrowed from the Naxalites and reflects the links which had developed between the Naxal groups and the Jharkhand movement.
37. For instance, Basant Narain Singh, a landlord of Ramgarh, joined the movement in 1979. The landed interests had supported the JHP at its inception, and their financial contributions were vital to its activities. The radicalism of the JMM and its allies in the 1970s had alienated the landed interests, but in the late 1970s, the landlords reaffirmed their support for the Jharkhand movement. The reasons behind their renewal of support in the late 1970s were much the same as in the early 1950s.

38. Dikus were now defined as all exploiters including the tribal ones.
39. There were many economic blockades in the region organised by the AJSU and other constituents of JCC from the late 1980s until the late 1990s. Though the degree of success varied from blockade to blockade, the idea behind them was to make strategic use of the minerals of the region (by denying access to the minerals to rest of the country) in order to draw national and media attention to the demands of the Jharkhandis.
40. *Times of India*, 23 July 1997.
41. During my fieldwork, Shailendra Bhattacharya, member of the central committee and executive committee of JMM, complained that the purpose behind the creation of the JAAC was not being fulfilled since the Bihar government had not transferred powers to the JAAC.

4

Changing Patterns in the Development Profile of Jharkhand: 1950 to mid-1970s

The post-colonial Indian state, as discussed in chapter 2, depended heavily on a rationalist-integrationist and bureaucratic model of administration due to the nationalist discourse's dependence on the essentials of the colonial discourse. As a result of this rationalist model of administration, the primary concerns of the State have been integration and development, with the development programmes intended "not only to achieve certain tangible economic ends ... [but also to be] a step towards the goal of integration" (Mukhopadhayay 1989: 21). The State's emphasis on development was also appropriated by the 'subnational' identities to pursue and legitimise their claims, and this emphasis on development has affected the character of articulation of 'subnational' or ethnic identities as well as the State in a profound way. The State was unable to respond to the challenges from the ethnic identities with adequate political measures due to its dependence on the integrationist-rationalist paradigm. It continued to emphasise the need for a faster pace of development as a means to remove all allegiance to any other political identity, save the nationalist Indian identity. It appears that as far as the State is concerned, better administration of development programmes is the only possible reason to reorient the administrative boundaries now. Consequently, the ethnic identities have also taken on board this factor (in addition to whatever factors that they invoke to mobilise the people into a politically significant identity) to demand political recognition.

Development and identity have thus became inextricably linked, as is evident in the following:

> किसी भी क्षेत्र का विकास कौन कर सकता है? हमारा विचार है कि किसी भी क्षेत्र का विकास उस क्षेत्र की जनता ही कर सकती है। किसी भी क्षेत्र की क्या-क्या समस्याएं है उनका कैसा हल होना चाहिए – इसे उस क्षेत्र की जनता से अधिक कोई समझ नही सकता। जनता अपना विकास खुद करे, अपनी विकास की समस्याओं मे दिलचस्पी ले, अपने विकास के लिये पहल करे, विकास के कार्यक्रम बने और विकास के लिये सामूहिक प्रयत्न करे, यही एक मात्र रास्ता है। ... लेकिन जनता को अपना विकास करने के लिए जरुरी है कि कुछ अधिकार हो। ये अधिकार स्वायत्ता के अधिकार है। हम इस अधिकार की माँग सिर्फ प्रस्तावित झारखण्ड प्रान्त के लिये नही बल्कि पूरे देश के सभी राज्यो एवं क्षेत्रो के लिये करते है। ... स्वायत्ता की माँग सिर्फ जनता के आर्थिक विकास के लिये नही बल्कि इसका उद्देश्य एक जाति को दूसरी जाति के शोषण से बचाना भी है। (Soren 1992: 19)

> [Who can bring about development in an area? In our opinion, only the public of that region can develop an area. What are the problems of a region, how should they be solved—no one can understand this better than the people of that area. The only avenue is that the people must develop themselves, take interest in the problems of development of their area, take initiatives for their development, chalk out development programmes and make efforts for their collective development.... [B]ut for the people to develop themselves, it is essential that they have some rights. This right is the right to autonomy. We do not demand this right only for the proposed Jharkhand state but for the whole country.... The reason for demanding autonomy is not only for economic development but the aim for this demand is to save one jati [here the term jati has been used to mean community and, very loosely, tribes] from exploitation by another jati.]

This extract from one of the writings of Shibu Soren[1] clarifies the Jharkhandi leadership's views about the interlinkages between the poor development profile of the region and the demand for autonomy. Soren appears to stress the drawbacks of weak local development institutions and poor linkages between communities and the larger policy mechanism as important factors in the poor performance of development policy in the region. Additionally, the quote also raises a number of other issues that link up with the issues of alternative delivery mechanisms for

development policy. However, the Jharkhandi leadership does not clarify what it means by 'development'.

It is an elusive task to define development. The meaning of development is highly context specific and changes according to the point of view and ideological orientation of the person concerned. Some people may define development as change, but it can be argued that not all change constitutes development. One point of view may regard development as the removal of poverty, while another may go on to define development as an increase in the societal groups' capacities to organise and utilise their resources and implement their agenda. Still others may define development in social, political, economic and/or cultural terms.

Apart from the difficulty of defining development, the understanding of what it means can differ between the State and the beneficiary population. Presently, irrespective of their points of view, development for both the State and the population of the Jharkhand region means similar things, such as greater avenues for employment and education, improved health facilities, and so on. However, due to development initiatives that may be undertaken by the newly created state of Jharkhand, the meaning of development for the Jharkhandi population may change.

For the purpose of our analysis, development may be defined as improvements in the standard of living of the population. It involves better availability of health and educational facilities as well as improvement in the availability of the opportunities of gainful employment. It also consists of improvement in the economic conditions of the population. Consequently, this analysis will utilise available data to evaluate the changing development profile of the Jharkhand region (now the newly created state) and undivided Bihar between 1950 and the early nineties, in terms of improvements in health, education and employment opportunities. Some supplementary data such as agricultural output of the region and irrigated area will also be utilised (wherever available) to chart out the changes in the potential for economic improvement.

During fieldwork in the mid-nineties, respondents were eager to point out that the Bihar government in Patna was not concerned about the development profile of the Jharkhand region.

They alleged that there existed a north versus south Bihar divide as far as development activities were concerned and that the people from north Bihar dominated the government. For instance, a panchayat head in the Sonahatu block of Ranchi district alleged that "झारखण्ड के खिलाफ षड्यन्त्र है, यहाँ का पैसा बाहर जाता है और उससे वहाँ का [बिहार का] विकास होता है" [There is a conspiracy against the Jharkhand region, the wealth from here goes out and it is used for the development activities there (in the rest of Bihar)].[2] Consequently, the resources from south Bihar (the Jharkhand region) were utilised for development activities elsewhere and inadequate attention was given to the region. Therefore, the analysis that follows also compares the development profile of the Jharkhand region (present-day Jharkhand state) with that of undivided Bihar.

An effort to define the term 'development profile' is not unproblematic as it is directly related to the definition of development. Since this study defines development as an improvement in the standard of living of the population, the term development profile has been used to refer to the patterns emerging from an analysis of all the indicators of development for a region at any given point of time. For instance, the development profile of Jharkhand in 1951 refers to the broad patterns of development which emerge from an analysis of all the development indicators available for that year, such as the figures for infant mortality, public health, employment levels, educational levels and so on. Besides, the analysis also takes account of the potential of economic growth reflected in indicators such as changes in irrigation potential and land under major crops (whenever available), and the changes in the pattern since the last available comparable data.

The changing development profiles of Bihar as a whole and the Jharkhand region have been analysed in this chapter and the next, to find out whether there has been any change in the development profile of Jharkhand. A comparison with the development profile of Bihar as a whole will indicate if the gap between the two (if any) is real or imagined. This, in turn, will clarify whether the development issues in the articulation of the Jharkhandi identity are real or perceived.[3]

Development Profile in 1951

As far as the development profile of Jharkhand in 1951 was concerned, the state of the population was poor, but slightly better than that of Bihar as a whole. In 1951, the area now known as the Jharkhand state accounted for 42 per cent of the total land area of Bihar and had a population of more than nine million. Over 23 per cent of the total population of Bihar lived in Jharkhand (table 1). However, nearly 85 per cent of the tribal population of Bihar in 1951 lived in the Jharkhand region (table 2). Within Jharkhand, the Scheduled Tribes accounted for 37 per cent of the total population of the region.[4]

Table 1: Land area and population in Jharkhand, 1951

	Area (sq. mi.)	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	29,821	9,318,792	4,753,241	4,565,551
Bihar	70,330	40,225,947	20,223,675	20,002,272
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	42.40	23.16	23.50	22.82

Source: Census of India 1951, vol. V, Bihar Part II-A (Tables A, C, D & E series)—General Population Tables (n.d.).

Table 2: Scheduled Tribes population in Jharkhand, 1951

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	3,430,599	1,707,521	1,723,051
Bihar	4,049,183	2,017,414	2,031,769
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	84.72	84.63	84.80
Jharkhand percentage	36.81	35.92	37.74

Source: Census of India 1951, vol. V, Bihar Part II-A (Tables A, C, D & E series)—General Population Tables (n.d.).

Clearly, the tribals were a numerical minority but still constituted one of the most cohesive social groups in the region. Consequently, both the tribals and the non-tribals were significant in the electoral politics of the Jharkhand region in independent India.

The development indicators of the area at that time offer a mixed picture. In 1950, the condition of the Jharkhand region was better than the average for Bihar state as far as infant mortality, birth and death rates are concerned. Infant mortality was significantly lower (63 per 1,000 live births) in Jharkhand compared to Bihar (81 per 1,000 live births) (table 3). Even after making allowances for the poor recording of deaths of infants in a not too-conducive terrain such as Jharkhand (compared to the plains of north Bihar), the difference in the figures indicates a better health profile in the Jharkhand region. In the case of birth and death rates, the difference between Jharkhand and Bihar as a whole is not significant. Jharkhand still had a better health scenario than Bihar.

As far as agricultural production is concerned, Jharkhand contributed a significant share to the output of all the major crops in Bihar (table 4). It produced as much as 42 per cent of the total paddy, 25 per cent of the maize and 20 per cent of *arhar* (a variety of lentils) produced in Bihar state, in 1949–50.

Nevertheless, as far as the availability of agricultural finance is concerned, the share of the Jharkhand region was not high. Only 16 per cent of the total money advanced to agriculturists in Bihar was spent in Jharkhand in 1950–51 (table 5). The area of Jharkhand comprised over 42 per cent of the total land area of Bihar and it had 23 per cent of the total population (table 1). Moreover, the landscape of the Jharkhand region is hilly and most agriculture was rain-dependent. In such a scenario, the low figure for Jharkhand as regards agricultural finance was unsatisfactory. However, this did not reflect any systematic neglect of the region as development planning was still emerging in India.

Another related point that would have a bearing on the Jharkhand's development profile is that of wasteland development because the region has a rather hilly terrain, and wasteland development has far-reaching consequences for the region. In the year 1951–52, 48 per cent (table 6) of the total amount spent on wasteland development in Bihar state was spent in the Jharkhand region. However, more than 48 per cent of funds yielded only 21 per cent of the total area reclaimed by manual labour. State tractors were not employed in Jharkhand. This is indicative of a trend in Jharkhand where large amounts of investment have lead only to a modest improvement in the development profile.

Table 3: Infant mortality, birth and death rates in Jharkhand, 1950

	Total live births[1]	*Total deaths*[1]	*Infant mortality*[2]	*Infant mortality rate*[2] *(per 1,000 live births)*	*Birth rate*[3] *(per 1,000 of population)*	*Death rate*[3] *(per 1,000 of population)*
Jharkhand	158,257	109,280	9,691	62.77	17.08	11.54
Bihar	714,376	461,335	57,945	81.11	19.01	12.36

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 46).
[1] Registered.
[2] Provisional figures.
[3] Based on 1941 calculations.

Table 4: Output of principal crops in Jharkhand, 1949–50 (in thousands of tons)

	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Gram*	*Barley*	*Maize*	*Masoor**	*Arhar**	*Kesri**	*Peas*	*Sugar cane*	*Potato*	*Tobacco*	*Jute*	*Chilli*
Jharkhand	1583	10	29	19	105	1	27	27	4	7	20	0	1	0
Bihar	3744	357	296	213	412	87	129	468	71	265	219	12	76	15
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	42.28	2.80	9.79	8.92	25.48	1.14	20.93	5.76	5.63	2.64	9.13	0	1.31	0

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 22).
* A variety of lentils.

Table 5: Land improvement loans to agriculturists in Jharkhand, 1950–51# (in Rs.)

	Loans advanced
Jharkhand	2,268,922
Bihar	13,826,343
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	16.41

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 116).
Under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884, Natural Calamities Loans Act and Gratuitous Relief.

Table 6: Loans disbursed for wasteland reclamation and area reclaimed in Jharkhand, 1951–52

	Land improvement loans disbursed (Rs.)	*Area reclaimed (acres)*	
		By manual labour	*By state tractors*
Jharkhand	1,361,488	7,976	–
Bihar	2,804,286	37,208	3,602
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	48.55	21.43	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 27).

The figures available for public medical institutions (table 7) also express the same scenario. In 1947, 22 per cent of the total indoor and 21 per cent of the total outdoor patients treated in Bihar (in all medical institutions owned, subsidised or aided by public authorities) were in the Jharkhand region. These figures are proportionate to the percentage of the total population of Bihar living in Jharkhand and, therefore, indicate that the health system in Jharkhand was not drastically inferior to that of Bihar.

However, health facilities in the Jharkhand region depended more heavily on governmental aid than in Bihar as a whole. The figures for income and expenditure incurred by medical institutions (publicly owned, aided or subsidised) show that there was a larger expenditure in Jharkhand (table 8). The income of such institutions in the Jharkhand region accounted for a mere 9 per cent of the total income, whereas their expenditure accounted for more than 20 per cent of the total spent by such institutions

Table 7: Patients treated in public medical institutions in Jharkhand, 1947

	Number of indoor patients	*Number of outdoor patients*
Jharkhand	27,768	1,191,301
Bihar	127,844	5,620,869
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	21.72	21.19

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 70).

Table 8: Expenses of public medical institutions in Jharkhand, 1947 (in Rs.)

	Income	*Expenditure*
Jharkhand	1,033,483	958,998
Bihar*	10,797,502	4,712,237
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	9.57	20.35

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 70).
* Figures for Saharsa are not available.

in Bihar as a whole. The proportion of expenditure in Jharkhand was still lower than the proportion of population living in the region.

The fact that Jharkhand region was fairly urban even in 1949–50 can be seen from table 9. Over 29 per cent of the total population living within municipal limits in Bihar resided in Jharkhand. The same table also indicates a rather equitable expenditure on primary education in the Jharkhand region. It is noteworthy that 36 per cent of the income of municipal councils in Jharkhand was spent on primary education, whereas the corresponding figure for Bihar was 25 per cent. This indicates the importance attached to primary education in urban Jharkhand by the policy machinery in 1951. The percentage share of Jharkhand in total municipal expenditure on primary schools in Bihar was 26, whereas the corresponding percentage share of income was 24. Clearly, there was more expenditure on, than income from, primary schools in urban Jharkhand in 1950.

Moving on to overall revenue generation, agricultural income-tax collection from Jharkhand contributed only 7 per cent to the

Table 9: Municipal councils' income and expenditure on primary education in Jharkhand, 1949–50 (in Rs.)

	Number of municipalities	*Population within municipal limits*	*Total income (excluding opening balance)*	*Total expenditure*	*Percentage of expenditure on primary schools to total income*
Jharkhand	19	487,408	2,920,680	2,690,107	35.92
Bihar*	58	1,653,346*	12,399,875	10,284,678	24.97
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	32.75	29.48	23.55	26.15	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 75).
* Excludes Dehri Notified Area Committee.

total agricultural tax collected in Bihar in 1950–51 (table 10). This is despite Jharkhand contributing a high proportion of agricultural produce (table 4).

Table 10: Collection of agricultural income tax in Jharkhand, 1950–51

	Tax collected (Rs.)#
Jharkhand	498,978
Bihar	6,986,079
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	7.14

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 101).
Provisional figures.

On the other hand, the Jharkhand region contributed 53 per cent to the total revenues collected in Bihar from taxes on electricity (table 11). This indicates the large-scale industrial installation in the region even in 1951 due to the vast mineral deposits. The industrialisation translated into a higher percentage of non-agricultural employment (discussed in subsequent pages). Jharkhand's share of sales-tax collection was also high (table 12). The higher industrial employment meant higher consumption rates which, in turn, led to higher sales-tax collection.

Table 11: Collection of revenues under Electricity Act 1948 in Jharkhand, 1950–51

	Tax Collected (Rs.)#
Jharkhand	579,808
Bihar	1,085,565
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	53.41

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 109).
Provisional figures.

An important issue in the politico-economic dynamics of Jharkhand has been that of land alienation (see chapter 3). The high and unreasonable rates of interest charged by the moneylenders was one of the reasons for the numerous tribal revolts during the British period. The Jharkhandi leaders have asserted that money-

Table 12: Collection of sales tax in Jharkhand, 1950–51

	Tax collected (Rs.)#
Jharkhand	15,026,418
Bihar	40,814,811
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	36.81

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 103).
Provisional figures.

lending business has been on the rise in Jharkhand, and, consequently, more and more land was being alienated from the tribal cultivators.

However, the figures for the year 1950–51 do not show an abnormally high number of moneylending licences in Jharkhand (table 13). Only 23 per cent of the total number of licences issued in Bihar were for Jharkhand. The same table also indicates that Jharkhand accounted for only 5 per cent of secured loans and 26 per cent of the unsecured loans disbursed by moneylenders in Bihar in 1950–51. Clearly, more unsecured loans were disbursed in Jharkhand than secured ones. Frequently, land is offered as collateral in rural India. The significantly lower amount of secured loans advanced in Jharkhand in 1951 seem to reflect some degree of effectiveness then of the legal provisions which forbid such transfers of land from tribals to non-tribal persons. Nevertheless, one cannot rule out that moneylenders may have become de facto (as opposed to de jure) owners of land on which interest payment had defaulted.

Other indicators in 1951 for the region's level of advancement reinforce the above picture. Jharkhand had better conditions than the average for Bihar as a whole. In a way, it seems natural that an area that has greater non-agricultural activities should yield better results as far as the indicators of socio-economic well-being are concerned.

The indicators that will now be discussed, namely, the livelihood classes and educational patterns cross-tabulated with livelihood classes merely confirm this deduction for 1951. The category of Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar in table 14 shows that the proportion of population that depended on non-agricultural occupations and resided in Jharkhand was higher than the per-

Table 13: Number of moneylenders' licences issued and loans advanced in Jharkhand, 1950–51

	Number of licences	*Amount of loan advanced (in Rs.)*		
		With security	*Without security*	*Total*
Jharkhand	1,128	8,215,177	1,532,486	9,747,663
Bihar*	4,996	153,090,492*	5,792,081	158,882,573
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	22.57	5.36	26.45	6.13

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951 (1953: 130).
* Figures from Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga include the figures for loans advanced without security as well.

centage of people who lived in the region. Approximately 23 per cent of the total number of people who depended on agricultural activities in Bihar state resided in the Jharkhand region, whereas the same figures for those in non-agricultural occupations was slightly higher, at almost 27 per cent.

Table 14: Percentage share of livelihood classes in Jharkhand, 1951

	Agricultural and related activities			*Non-agricultural activities*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	22.55	22.68	22.42	26.91	28.11	25.50
Jharkhand	83.78	82.04	85.58	16.21	17.95	14.41
Bihar	86.04	84.99	87.10	13.95	15.00	12.89

Source: Census of India 1951, vol. V, Bihar Part II-B Tables—Economic Tables (1953).
Note: The 1951 census differed from the earlier ones because "the 1941 table gave distribution of population of each district by the main communities, this table gives distribution of population of each district according to . . . livelihood classes", *Census of India 1951, vol. I—India* (n.d.: 333). It classified the population according to self-supporting, non-earning dependent and earning dependent in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. This figure is for the total population, and not workers only, as in later years.

Clearly, a greater proportion of the industrial workforce of Bihar lived in Jharkhand in 1951, which indicates that there was a higher level of industrial activity in the region compared to the state as a whole. The same conclusions can be reached by looking at the proportion of population dependent on the two kinds of occupations, namely, agricultural and non-agricultural. In Jharkhand, eighty-three out of every 100 persons depended on agricultural activities, whereas in Bihar as a whole, the same figure was eighty-six out of every 100.

The patterns that emerge from the analysis of livelihood classes in 1951 are reinforced by those emerging from an analysis of the occupational patterns.[5] The category Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar in table 14A shows that in 1951, 25 per cent of those in agricultural and related activities in the whole of Bihar lived in the Jharkhand region. This is not substantially different from the proportion of population that lived in Jharkhand. The figure for the non-agricultural activities was 32 per cent, which was significantly higher. Thus, the Jharkhand region had a predominant place in the industrial activities of Bihar.[6]

Table 14A: Occupational patterns in Jharkhand, 1951
(in percentage)

	Agricultural and related activities			*Non-agricultural activities*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as a percentage of Bihar	24.82	23.54	27.69	31.67	32.10	30.09
Jharkhand	33.17	42.62	23.33	6.43	10.04	2.67
Bihar	30.95	42.55	19.22	4.70	7.35	2.02

Source: *Census of India 1951, vol. V, Bihar Part II-B Tables—Economic Tables* (1953).
Note: The 1951 census differed from the earlier ones because "the 1941 table gave distribution of population of each district by the main communities, this table gives distribution of population of each district according to . . . livelihood classes", *Census of India 1951, vol. I—India*, (n.d., p. 333). It classified the population according to self-supporting, non-earning dependent and earning dependent in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. This figure is for the total population and not workers only as in later years. Therefore, these figures have been arrived at by subtracting non-earning dependants from the figures for the categories of agricultural and non-agricultural classes. This is the closest figure that can be calculated for the category of workers in the two sectors in the year 1951.

Within the Jharkhand region, 33 per cent of the population worked in agricultural activities compared with only 6 per cent in non-agricultural activities. Adding the two figures, we can say that nearly 40 per cent of the population was gainfully employed in Jharkhand in 1951. For Bihar as whole, the same figure adds up to roughly 35 per cent. Evidently, there were greater employment opportunities in the Jharkhand region than in Bihar as a whole, in both the sectors. As would be expected in the mineral-rich Jharkhand region, non-agricultural employment was higher here than in Bihar. However, in itself, the Jharkhand region was no island of industrial activity within Bihar. Within Jharkhand, employment levels still showed a heavy dependence on agricultural activities.

As far as the advancement in the educational levels amongst livelihood classes is concerned, table 15 indicates a mixed picture. In 1951 the Jharkhand region seems to have been a repository of literates who depended on the non-agricultural sector for their livelihood: more than 54 per cent of the total literate persons in the non-agricultural livelihood class in Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region. In Bihar as a whole, merely, 20 per cent of the non-agricultural population was literate, while the corresponding figures for Jharkhand was 41 per cent. This stark difference in the figures when read with the pattern emerging from other development indicators indicates that most probably, it was the skilled workforce—often from other regions of India—that had inflated the numbers of literate people in the Jharkhand region. It is, therefore, unwise to attach much significance to these figures.

In the agricultural livelihood classes, the average literacy in the Jharkhand region, in 1951, was 7 per cent compared with 9 per cent in Bihar as a whole. The figure for female literacy in the agricultural classes in both Bihar as a whole and the Jharkhand region was only about 2 per cent. Male literacy in the same category was also significantly lower in the Jharkhand region than the average for Bihar. Thus, overall, the state of literacy in Jharkhand in 1951 left much to be desired. While literacy rates amongst the non-agricultural population in the Jharkhand region were substantially better than the average for Bihar, amongst the majority of the agricultural workers, they were worse. However,

Table 15: Percentage share of livelihood classes by educational standards in Jharkhand, 1951

Educational standards	*Agriculture-related activities*			*Non-agricultural activities*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
	Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar					
Literate	17.64	16.89	22.92	54.11	62.13	29.27
Middle school	19.09	16.80	36.86	23.03	22.64	24.93
Matriculate	17.27	16.29	29.52	36.82	36.59	38.70
Intermediate	12.32	11.59	22.58	23.27	22.80	26.94
Graduate and others#	10.00	10.20	7.36	21.66	21.11	27.32
	Jharkhand					
Literate	6.90	11.56	2.24	40.57	62.39	12.29
Middle school	0.64	1.01	0.28	3.13	4.54	1.31
Matriculate	0.12	0.21	0.03	2.30	3.60	0.61
Intermediate	0.01	0.02	0.004	0.40	0.62	0.12
Graduate and others#	0.03	0.06	0.003	0.71	1.13	0.18
	Bihar					
Literate	8.82	15.53	2.19	20.18	28.23	10.71
Middle school	0.76	1.36	0.17	3.66	5.64	1.34
Matriculate	0.15	0.29	0.02	1.68	2.76	0.40
Intermediate	0.03	0.05	0.003	0.46	0.76	0.11
Graduate and others#	0.07	0.14	0.01	0.89	1.50	0.17

Source: Census of India 1951, vol. V, Bihar Part II-A, Tables (A, C, D, & E series) (n.d.).
Note: The 1951 census differed from the earlier ones because "the 1941 table gave distribution of population of each district by the main communities, this table gives distribution of population of each district according to . . . livelihood classes", *Census of India 1951* (n.d., I: 333). It classified the population according to self-supporting, non-earning dependent and earning dependent in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. This figure is for the total population and not workers only as in later years. This table has, therefore, used the tables on livelihood classes 1951 to calculate the proportion of population in various educational categories amongst the agricultural and non-agricultural livelihood classes. Therefore, the cross-tabulation for educational levels is available only for the entire population and not the working population, as in later censuses.
Totals for the Jharkhand region have been arrived at by adding the relevant categories for each district of the region.
Includes graduate, postgraduate, teaching, engineering, commerce, agriculture, veterinary, legal, medical and other qualifications.

as is evident from table 15, a discussion of the various educational levels attained by persons in the two livelihood classes is of extremely limited value. The proportion of educated people is too small to be of consequence.

The general development indicators in the Jharkhand region at the time of the first general election do not seem to be very poor vis-à-vis Bihar as a whole. Unlike what the Jharkhandi leaders projected at that time, there is no indication of an extremely poor development profile in Jharkhand relative to Bihar as a whole. An equitable and proportional share of resources was allocated to the region. Nonetheless, the fact that different socio-economic and geographical conditions in the Jharkhand region required a different and more intensive approach was not acknowledged. However, this could hardly be expected in a province of a newly decolonised India. The pattern which emerges from the above analysis also underlines the fact that in the early fifties, only a very small proportion of persons had benefited by the expansion of industrialisation in the region. On a comparative level, thus, Bihar as a whole and the Jharkhand region within it offered similar development profiles.

Against the backdrop of such a development profile, the first general election was conducted in 1952. In chapter 3, it was noticed that by this time the Jharkhand movement had acquired mass appeal and Jaipal Singh and his Jharkhand Party were highlighting the question of an autonomous territory for the Jharkhandis. The 1952 election was dominated by the issue of Jharkhandi identity and the demand for the creation of an autonomous state in Jharkhand, based on tribal identity. Because of the fact that the development profile of the Jharkhand region was marginally better than that of Bihar as a whole, development issues were not considered politically significant—a situation that was set to change in the years to come.

Development Profile in 1961

Before the census of 1961 was conducted, certain developments on the national political stage exercised a profound impact on the scope and planning of development in the Jharkhand region. The States Reorganisation Commission had reported on the

principles of reorganisation and the government had implemented most of its recommendations. Consequently, a number of new states had been created and the boundaries of other states had been considerably altered.

This had some effect on the Jharkhand region as well. The SRC had not recommended the creation of the state of Jharkhand. The hopes of Jaipal Singh and other Jharkhandi leaders of being able to contribute directly to the development activities in the region were thus belied. This decision of the commission injured the legitimacy of the Jharkhand Party and led to a gradual decline in its popular support (see chapter 3).

Efforts to involve local-level initiative and participation in development activities were started on 2 October 1952 in Bihar with the formation of four community development areas and one community development block under the Community Development Movement (CDM). Over the next five year plan, the entire state was divided into 591 community development blocks.[7] There were very few instances of the CDM being able to effectively implement the development agenda of the government. This marked a watershed in the development planning in India. Due to the lack of success of the CDM, beginning in the mid-1950s, there was an increasing dependence on government line agencies to implement development programmes. This heavily bureaucratic model of development turned out to be inefficient and incompetent and failed to accelerate the pace of development in the Jharkhand region and elsewhere.

By 1961, two five-year-plans had already been implemented. However, as far as the Jharkhand region was concerned, the achievements of a decade of centralised planning and bureaucratic implementation had been quite modest.

Reorientation in the administrative layout between 1951 and 1961[8] had affected the Jharkhand region. The immediate result was that by 1961, it emerged as an even larger percentage of the total land area of Bihar. Jharkhand now comprised 46 per cent of the total land area of Bihar. Accordingly, there was also a slight increase in the percentage of population within Jharkhand, which now accounted for 25 per cent of the total population of the state (table 16).

Table 16: Land area and population in Jharkhand, 1961

	Area (sq. mi.)	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	30,763	11,606,489	5,921,901	5,684,588
Bihar	67,196	46,455,610	23,301,449	23,154,161
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	45.78	24.98	25.41	24.55

Source: Census of India 1961, Paper I of 1962—Bihar (n.d.).

Another significant factor in the development planning and political texture of the region was the diminishing percentage of the tribal population in the Jharkhand area. From 37 per cent in 1951 (table 2), the tribal component of the Jharkhand population diminished to only 34 per cent in 1961. Although 94 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribes of Bihar resided in Jharkhand in 1961 (up from 85 per cent in 1951), their relative percentage in the total population of the Jharkhand region had declined (table 17).

Table 17: Scheduled Tribes population in Jharkhand, 1961

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	3,938,065	1,953,019	1,985,046
Bihar	4,204,770	2,087,994	2,116,776
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	93.65	93.53	93.77
Jharkhand percentage	33.92	32.97	34.91

Source: Census of India 1961, Paper I of 1962—Bihar (n.d.).

As far as the development profile of the Jharkhand region was concerned, an improvement can be noticed in the period 1951–61. This improvement was at a rate that was better than for Bihar as a whole. In 1961, the infant mortality rate in Jharkhand fell to 59 per 1,000 live births from 68 in 1950 (table 3), whereas the average for the whole of Bihar increased from 81 in 1950 to 87 in 1961 (tables 3 and 18). This probably indicates a better availability of primary health facilities in the Jharkhand region than in Bihar. By 1961, the death rate for the whole of Bihar had fallen to 4.94 per 1,000 of population, whereas in the Jharkhand region it had fallen further to 4.83. The birth rate also fell in both

Table 18: Infant mortality, birth and death rates in Jharkhand, 1961

	Total live births	*Total deaths*	*Infant mortality*	*Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)*	*Birth rate (per 1,000 of population)**	*Death rate (per 1,000 of population)**
Jharkhand	117,387	54,036	7,157	58.95	10.61	4.83
Bihar	458,442	229,442	39,891	87.01	9.86	4.94
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	25.60	23.55	17.94	–	–	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 96).
* Mid-year population.

Bihar as a whole and Jharkhand. The decline in the birth and death rates indicate that the family planning campaign of the government seemed to have shown results, and that there was a gradual improvement in basic health facilities during the operation of the first two five-year-plans in Bihar.

However, it seems that the improvement in the availability of health facilities had not progressed beyond the basic and primary health care. Table 19 indicates that there was a need for improvement in health facilities in the Jharkhand region as well as in Bihar as a whole in the early sixties. Admittedly, the overall death rate had fallen considerably by 1961–62. However, the causes of death indicate that there was scope to arrest it further by improving the public health facilities. With the exception of cholera, Jharkhand's share in the diseases that caused death in Bihar as a whole is significant (table 19).

Considering the fact that in 1961, the Jharkhand region accounted for only about 25 per cent of the population of Bihar, its share in the number of deaths in different categories of diseases is disproportionate. The Jharkhand region accounted for 37 per cent of deaths due to dysentery and diarrhoea, which indicates that other than primary health centres, safe drinking water and sanitation was required. Evidently, such public health services were in a poorer state in the Jharkhand region vis-à-vis Bihar as a whole. However, in Bihar as a whole as well as in the Jharkhand region, the single largest killer was unspecified fever causing 69 per cent and 76 per cent of deaths, respectively. None of the other diseases causing death form a significant percentage in the total number of deaths due to diseases in 1961–62. Therefore, as far as health facilities were concerned, the decade of 1951–61 saw some improvements in both Jharkhand as well as Bihar as a whole, but a lot more was still required.

Another good indicator of the development profile of a region is achievements or failures of the government delivery mechanism in improving the level of education/literacy. The available data for 1951 and 1961 are constructed quite differently and hence meaningful comparisons cannot be made. However, table 20 lists the number of children at school in 1961–62. It shows that 25 per cent of the total number of children at school in Bihar state were in the Jharkhand region with a slight skew in favour of

Table 19: Disease-wise distribution of deaths in Jharkhand, 1961–62

	Cholera	*Smallpox*	*Plague*	*Fever*	*Dysentery & diarrhoea*	*Respiratory*	*Injury*	*Other causes*	*Total*
Jharkhand	610	278	40	37,886	1,889	1,623	1062	12,612	49,648
Bihar	8,883	786	78	158,155	5,101	5,189	3,246	48,004	229,442
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	6.86	35.36	51.28	23.95	37.03	31.27	32.71	26.27	21.63
Jharkhand percentage	1.22	0.55	0.08	76.30	3.80	3.26	2.13	25.40	–
Bihar percentage	3.87	0.34	0.03	68.93	2.22	2.26	1.41	20.92	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 97).

female students, which is quite rare in Indian conditions. The figure for children at school in Jharkhand is roughly the same as the percentage of population in the Jharkhand region (table 16). Hence, all we can deduce from this data is that there was no imbalance in the allocation of resources to the Jharkhand region in the early sixties.

Table 20: Number of children at school in Jharkhand, 1961–62

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	1,055,126	817,711	237,315
Bihar	4,152,641	3,324,292	828,349
Rest of Bihar	3,097,515	2,506,581	591,034
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	25.40	24.59	28.64

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 118).

A more detailed educational profile cross-tabulated with the occupational pattern is provided in table 21. This shows that in 1961, 21 per cent of literates employed in agricultural activities and 34 per cent of those in non-agricultural activities in Bihar state were in the Jharkhand region. The same figures in 1951 were 18 per cent and 54 per cent (table 15). However, this comparison is not entirely reliable because the data available for 1951 cross-tabulated livelihood classes with educational standards, whereas the 1961 data lists occupational patterns cross-tabulated with educational standards.[9] Therefore, the changes in the educational profile of workers are misleading, and meaningful comparisons with the 1951 figures cannot be arrived at. The 1961 educational profile has, therefore, been analysed independently.

In 1961, the proportion of literate agricultural workers in the Jharkhand region was substantially lower than the proportion of the population that resided in the region. On the other hand, the share of literates in the non-agricultural category was skewed in favour of Jharkhand. The percentage of illiterate workers who lived in Jharkhand was also substantial, with more than 30 per cent of such workers in both the sectors of the economy living in the region. Furthermore, 88 per cent of the agricultural workers and 63 per cent of the non-agricultural workers in the Jharkhand region were illiterate (table 21).

Table 21: Percentage share of occupational categories by educational standards in Jharkhand, 1961

Educational standards	*Agriculture-related activities*[3]			*Non-agricultural activities*[4]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
	Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar					
Illiterate	32.75	26.33	41.42	31.52	33.02	28.42
Literate[1]	20.75	20.12	39.70	33.84	34.53	14.48
Middle school[2]	24.33	22.94	75.90	37.19	37.50	29.32
Matriculate and above	10.76	10.62	40.89	37.11	36.88	47.48
	Jharkhand					
Illiterate	88.17	78.66	98.39	63.30	55.37	95.22
Literate[1]	9.41	17.04	1.21	23.44	28.66	1.74
Middle school[2]	2.28	4.04	0.38	8.29	9.98	1.25
Matriculate and above	0.14	0.28	0.005	7.85	9.46	1.13
	Bihar					
Illiterate	82.75	73.99	98.51	63.91	55.45	93.16
Literate[1]	13.94	20.98	1.26	22.04	27.45	3.34
Middle school[2]	2.88	4.36	0.21	7.09	8.80	1.18
Matriculate and above	0.42	0.66	0.005	6.73	8.49	0.66

Source: Census of India 1961, vol. IV, Bihar Part II-B (i)—General Economic Tables (Tables B-I to B-IV & B-VII) (n.d.).

[1] Without educational level.

[2] Primary or junior basic.

[3] Includes cultivators and agricultural labourers.

[4] Includes those in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities; household industry; manufacturing other than household industry; construction; trade and commerce; transport, storage and communication; and other services.

The literacy percentage in 1961 amongst workers in the Jharkhand region, compared to Bihar state, was marginally better in the non-agricultural sector and was worse, in relation to Bihar, in the agricultural sector. Female literacy levels were poor in both Jharkhand and Bihar as a whole, with the percentage of non-agricultural literate women in the whole of Bihar being almost double the percentage of women in any other category in the two regions (although the absolute numbers are still quite small) (table 21).

Despite the large-scale illiteracy amongst workers in 1961, there seems to have been some progress in the attainment of middle-

level education in the Jharkhand region. The percentage of workers employed in non-agricultural occupations and educated up to middle school was eight. However, the percentage of similarly educated persons in agricultural occupations was still quite low at two. The progress of further education was still quite poor, with only 0.14 per cent of the agricultural workers in the Jharkhand region educated beyond matriculate level. This figure was better amongst the non-agricultural workers at 8 per cent. Even among women in Jharkhand, the proportion of non-agricultural women who were educated up to matriculate level and beyond was higher than the proportion of agricultural women with the same educational standard. Overall in the Jharkhand region, the population in non-agricultural activities was better educated than the agricultural workforce in 1961. This indicates that more and more educated persons preferred to go into non-agricultural occupations.[10] On the whole, the performance of the education policy did not show many signs of success in the Jharkhand region in the decade 1951 to 1961. It is true that Jharkhand did not fare too poorly compared with the average for Bihar state and that some improvements were noticed in the region. The overall pattern of education in the region, however, does not point to successful policy implementation.

Similarly, the occupational pattern of the region in 1961 indicates some progress (table 22). The Jharkhand region seemed to be offering more employment opportunities than Bihar as a whole. Almost 31 per cent of the agricultural workforce and 32 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce in Bihar state resided in Jharkhand in 1961. Significantly, 41 per cent of the women employed in agricultural activities in Bihar lived in the Jharkhand region. This indicates that more women worked in Jharkhand than Bihar as a whole and and that the female work participation rate in Jharkhand was higher.

The figures in table 22 also point to a better occupational scenario in the Jharkhand region, particularly in the non-agricultural sector. Whereas only 32 per cent of the total population was employed in agricultural activities in the whole of Bihar, the same figure for the Jharkhand region went up to 39 per cent in 1961. The difference in employment opportunities between Bihar as a whole and Jharkhand is further evident in the figures for non-

Table 22: Percentage share of occupations in Jharkhand, 1961

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	30.74	24.77	41.47	31.82	33.07	27.81
Jharkhand	39.14	39.74	38.74	12.21	19.29	4.88
Bihar	31.81	40.77	22.80	9.58	14.82	4.31

Source: Census of India 1961, vol. IV, Bihar Part II-B (i)—General Economic Tables (Tables B-I to B-IV & B-VII) (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators and agricultural labourers.

[2] Includes those in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, household industry; manufacturing other than household industry; construction; trade and commerce; transport, storage and communication; and other services.

agricultural activities. In Bihar state, only 10 per cent of the population was employed in non-agricultural activities, while in the Jharkhand region, 12 per cent of the population worked in such occupations. In sum, over 51 per cent of the population was gainfully employed in the Jharkhand region, whereas only about 41 per cent of population in Bihar as a whole was so employed. Also noteworthy is the fact that more women were gainfully employed in the Jharkhand region. About 44 per cent of the women in Jharkhand had employment, whereas for Bihar as a whole, the same figure was much lower, at about 27 per cent. However, one must not ignore the fact that in Jharkhand (as in Bihar), men found more opportunities in non-agricultural activities than women, who were still largely concentrated in agricultural employment.

Other indicators of development again yield a mixed pattern. Since a large proportion of the population was still engaged in agricultural occupations in 1961, the output of principal crops in the region is significant to this analysis. As table 23 tells us, the Jharkhand region continued its large contribution in the total output of paddy of Bihar state. However, the share of Jharkhand in the total agricultural produce of Bihar went down. In 1949–50, the region contributed more than 42 per cent of the total paddy production of Bihar (table 4), but by 1961–62 Jharkhand's contribution fell to 39 per cent, despite a 591-thousand-ton-

Table 23: Output of principal crops in Jharkhand, 1961–62 (in thousands of tons)

	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Gram*	*Barley*	*Maize*	*Masoor*	*Arhar*	*Kesri*	*Peas*	*Sugar cane*	*Potato*	*Tobacco*	*Jute*#	*Chilli*
Jharkhand	1,708	17	34	21	121	2	17	25	3	257	26	*	7	*
Bihar	4,335	513	296	253	826	75	89	521	54	6,229	219	13	1,264	14
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	39.40	3.31	11.48	8.30	14.64	2.66	19.10	4.79	5.55	4.12	11.87	0	0.55	0

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 49).

In thousands of bales of 400 pounds each.

* Less than 1,000 tons.

increase in the total production of paddy in Bihar as a whole. The share of the region in total maize production in Bihar state decreased significantly from 25 per cent in 1949–50 to 15 per cent in 1961–62. Although there was a doubling in the total output of maize in Bihar state (tables 4 and 23), the growth rate of maize production in the Jharkhand region was slower than in Bihar as a whole.

There was a marginal increase in Jharkhand's share in the total wheat production of Bihar. From contributing 2.80 per cent of the total wheat production in Bihar in 1949–50 (table 4), the Jharkhand region now produced 3.31 per cent. However, the actual increase (from ten thousand tons to seventeen thousand tons) was quite small when compared with the growth in the total wheat output of Bihar (from 357 to 513 thousand tons). Sugarcane production in Jharkhand grew from seven thousand tons in 1949–50 to 257 tons in 1961–62 (a thirty-five times hike) compared with a twenty-three times rise in the sugar cane output in Bihar as a whole. Despite there being a substantial improvement in the output of this cash crop in the Jharkhand region over a decade, the absolute figure is not significantly large enough and accounted for only about 4 per cent of the total sugar cane output in Bihar in 1961–62. Marginal improvements in the production of other crops can also be noticed, the prime examples being gram, barley, *masoor* (a variety of lentils) and potatoes. Some increase in the production of jute in Jharkhand can also be noticed which rose from 1,000 bales in 1949–50 to 7,000 bales in 1961–62 (tables 4 and 23). Overall, there was a modest growth in the agricultural output of the Jharkhand region between 1949–50 to 1961–62, but it was outstripped by the overall growth of agricultural output in the whole of Bihar during the same period.

Closely related to agricultural output is the question of availability of agricultural finance. Tables 24 and 25 show the amount of money advanced to agriculturists for the development of agriculture and reclamation of wasteland in order to further the agricultural production of the region. As table 24 shows, of the total money advanced to agriculturists in Bihar state, only 4 per cent went to the Jharkhand region in 1959–60. This figure had fallen drastically from the 1950–51 level of 16 per cent (table 5). A comparison of tables 5 and 24 shows that the total money advanced

to agriculturists in the Jharkhand region in 1959–60 had fallen not only in percentage terms but also in actual terms. In 1950–51, Rs. 2,268,922 worth of loans were given in the Jharkhand region, whereas by 1959–60, the figure had fallen to Rs. 1,392,843. Moreover, this decline occurred when the total amount of loans for agricultural improvement in Bihar as whole had more than doubled during the same period. Clearly, there was much less investment in agriculture in the Jharkhand region during this decade, which was reflected in the poor rate of growth of agricultural production in the region.

Table 24: Land improvement loans to agriculturists in Jharkhand, 1959–60#

	Loans advanced (Rs.)
Jharkhand	1,392,843
Bihar	32,663,478
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	4.26

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 267).
Distributed under Land Improvement Loan Act 1883 and Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884.

Poor availability of agricultural finance in the Jharkhand region is also shown in table 25. The total money spent on wasteland recovery loans in Jharkhand in 1959–60 was only 36 per cent of the total amount spent in the whole of Bihar. The same figure in 1951–52 was 49 per cent (table 6). The money spent on wasteland reclamation in the Jharkhand region had thus declined in real as well as proportional terms.

Consequently, wasteland recovery in Jharkhand also suffered. The total area of wasteland recovered by manual labour in 1959–60 (table 25) is only one-sixth of the total recovered in 1951–52 (table 6). The decline in the area of wasteland recovered is such that the total wasteland recovered in Bihar state in 1959–60 was only slightly higher than the total wasteland recovery in the Jharkhand region alone in 1951–52. Furthermore, wasteland recovered by manual labour in Jharkhand in 1959–60 was only 18 per cent[11] of the total so recovered in Bihar as a whole. The redeeming feature is that while there was no help from govern-

Table 25: Loans disbursed for wasteland reclamation and area reclaimed in Jharkhand, 1959–60

	Amount disbursed (Rs.)	*Area reclaimed (acres)*	
		*By manual labour**	*By state tractors/private enterprise/other means*
Jharkhand	132,909	1392.12	510.59
Bihar	366,597	7,638.70	510.59
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	36.25	18.22	100

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 55).
* With assistance of land improvement loans.

mental tractors in wasteland recovery in Jharkhand in 1951–52, in 1959–60 all the land recovered by these agencies lay in this region (table 25).

In the hilly terrain of Jharkhand, wasteland cannot always be easily recovered. In such circumstances, a steady if not increasing financial allocation for wasteland recovery can be expected and not a declining allocation, as is the case. The same applies to irrigation potential. There is a limit to expansion of irrigated area in the region, but there has been an overall decline in the total irrigated area in Jharkhand. This indicates a poor effort by the governmental machinery to enhance agricultural development.

The irrigation potential of the region was quite poor in 1960–61. A mere 12 per cent of the total irrigated area in Bihar was in the Jharkhand region (table 26). Also noticeable is the fact that more than 43 per cent of this meagre area was irrigated from 'other sources'. Since all the major sources of irrigation are listed separately, this heading in effect means that such areas were irrigated by seasonal rainfall.[12] The second largest source of irrigation in Jharkhand was tanks (39 per cent). During fieldwork, it was noticed that the irrigation tanks were seasonal tanks replenished by rainwater.

The third largest source of irrigation in the Jharkhand region in 1960–61 was wells (12 per cent). Water levels in wells fall during years of poor rainfall, making them ineffective as sources of irrigation. Interestingly, the dependence on rainfall for irrigation

Table 26: Area irrigated from different sources in Jharkhand, 1961–62 (in hectares)

	Government canals	*Private canals*	*Tanks*	*Wells*	*Other sources*	*Total area irrigated*
Jharkhand	10,926.75	2,023.47	90,246.87	27,923.91	99,554.84	230,675.87
Bihar	528,531.02	32,375.56	223,391.36	236,993.16	831,647.20	1,942,938.30
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	2.06	6.25	40.39	11.78	11.97	11.87
Jharkhand percentage	4.73	0.87	39.12	12.10	43.15	–
Bihar percentage	27.20	1.66	11.49	12.19	42.80	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 44).
Note: Totals may not tally due to rounding off of figures to the nearest thousands in the source and due to conversion of figures from acres in the source to hectares for comparative purposes. Factor used is 2.471 acres equals 1 hectare.

is equally heavy in Bihar as a whole (43 per cent). However, the most important irrigation source in Bihar state in 1960–61 was government canals, accounting for 27 per cent of the irrigation potential. In the case of the Jharkhand region, however, only 5 per cent of the irrigated area was served by government canals. The marginalisation of Jharkhand in the scheme of planned development as far as irrigation potential was concerned, is evident.

A related issue which indicates the development level and tests the claims of the Jharkhandi leaders that dikus have gradually usurped all land in Jharkhand is the transfer of agricultural land. Table 27 shows the registered deeds of sale of *rayati* holdings with occupancy rights, in 1961. Two trends are evident. Firstly, there were fewer transfers of lands (both entire as well as part holdings) in the Jharkhand region than in Bihar as a whole in 1961. The average number of transfers of entire holdings per district in Jharkhand was 188 compared with the Bihar average of 6,623. Similarly, the average area transferred in each district of the Jharkhand region was also far less.

However, the partial transfers in the Jharkhand region were far greater in number in 1961. Also salient is the fact that the average consideration money paid for both partial as well as entire transfers was far less in Jharkhand than similar average payments for similar transfers in Bihar state. This indicates that there was a certain degree of distress selling of land holdings in the Jharkhand region in the early sixties. It is likely that the poorer farmers in Jharkhand transferred a part of their holdings to generate funds for paying off interest overdue on earlier borrowings from moneylenders or for current needs. It is also equally likely that poorer farmers were constrained to transfer parts of their lands when faced with a debt called in by the moneylender. However, these statistics cannot be taken as wholly accurate since transfer of land to non-tribals was forbidden in the Jharkhand region since the colonial times. At the same time, it is equally likely that these statistics reflect merely the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Any moneylender who calls in his loan can become a de facto owner of the land without going in for the actual legal transfer of land title deed to his name (to avoid exposing himself to the questions of the official who will register his ownership),

Table 27: Average figures for registered deeds of sale of *rayati* holdings having occupancy rights, per district, in Jharkhand, 1961

	Entire				*In part*			
	Number	*Area transferred (in acres)*	*Annual payable to landlord (Rs.)*	*Consideration money (Rs.)*	*Number*	*Area transferred (in acres)*	*Annual payable to landlord (Rs.)*	*Consideration money (Rs.)*
Jharkhand	187.50	349.66	325.8	1,961,395	9,008.50	7,867.50	58,997	4,895,026.20
Bihar	6,623.36	5,489.81	13,423	3,550,159.5	42,511.09	23,251.81	72,848.54	21,349,641.81

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 239).

unless the moneylender himself is also a tribal. Consequently, these statistics need to be treated with caution.

A total of 1,048 new moneylenders' licences were issued in Jharkhand in 1961–62 compared to 1,128 in 1950–51 (table 13). The percentage of such licences issued for the rural areas of the region represented about 10 per cent of the rural area licences issued in the whole of Bihar, and more than 15 per cent of such licences were in force at the end of the year (table 28). This is not a very high proportion for an area where a quarter of the population lived.

As far as disbursal of secured loans by moneylenders was concerned, there was a decline in the share of the Jharkhand region in all such loans disbursed in Bihar state from 5 per cent in 1950–51 (table 13) to about 3 per cent in 1961–62. This pattern was also accompanied by a decline in the proportion of unsecured loans in the Jharkhand region from 26 per cent in 1950–51 to about 9 per cent in 1961–62. However, the actual amount of secured loans advanced in the Jharkhand region had increased substantially from Rs. 8,215,177 in 1950–51 to Rs. 79,258,710—almost a ten times rise. Keeping in mind the fact that land is most often the item of security in rural India, there may have been a serious threat of de facto alienation of tribal land. The decrease in the availability of governmental agricultural finances surely had a role to play in this matter.

Other development indicators in the region of Jharkhand show a similar picture for 1961. The development profile had improved over the last decade, but in areas where the responsibility had fallen on the shoulders of the policy apparatus (such as construction of canals, making agricultural finance available at favourable terms, and so on), the performance had left much to be desired. The measures taken by the government to implement its policy had not been effective in Jharkhand.

Agricultural tax collection from the region of Jharkhand in percentage terms, during the decade, fell further due to the poor performance of the agricultural sector. From 7 per cent of the total agricultural income tax collected in 1950–51 (table 10), the share of Jharkhand fell to 6 per cent in 1961–62 (table 29).

Sales tax collection, however, increased in the Jharkhand region. While in 1950–51, the region contributed 37 per cent to

Table 28: Number of moneylenders' licences issued, licences in force, and moneys advanced in Jharkhand, 1961–62

	Number of licences registered for the first time		*Number of licences in force at the end of the year*		*Amount advanced (in Rs.)*			
					With security		*Without security*	
	Urban	*Rural*	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban*	*Rural*
Jharkhand	471	577	4,003	5,422	9,522,932	69,735,778	885,851	10,058,307
Bihar	2,264	5,396	15,574	35,254	1,600,528,478	1,046,522,741	47,147,432	66,277,446
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	20.80	10.69	25.70	15.37	0.59	6.66	1.87	15.17

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 241).

the total sales tax collection in Bihar state (table 12), in 1961–62 the contribution rose to 43 per cent (table 30). Clearly, the non-agricultural sector was doing better than the agricultural sector. However, the policies of the government had nothing much to contribute in this aspect.

Table 29: Collection of agricultural income tax in Jharkhand, 1961–62

	Tax collected (Rs.)
Jharkhand	326,665
Bihar	5,284,369
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	6.18

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 213).

Table 30: Collection of sales tax in Jharkhand, 1961–62

	Tax Collected (Rs.)
Jharkhand	32,297,604
Bihar	74,443,528
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	43.38

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 215).

Admittedly, mineral extraction from the region and some heavy industry was largely the result of governmental effort, but apart from this, no major policy initiative was directed towards the development of non-agricultural activities in the region. This is reflected in the fact that despite comprising 46 per cent of the total land area of Bihar and being at the centre of the state's non-agricultural activity, the Jharkhand region had only 38 per cent of PWD road length in 1960 (table 31). Had the region not been so salient in the mineral policy of the government, the policy initiatives would perhaps have performed less efficiently in this field as well.

Thus, after two five-year-plans, two general elections and a decade of independent Indian governance, the Jharkhand region was relatively worse off with respect to many development profile indicators and showed only modest improvement in others. Clearly, the state of affairs had been improving but all the indica-

Table 31: Length of PWD roads in Jharkhand, 1960

	Total length of PWD roads (km)
Jharkhand	2,609
Bihar	6,951
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	37.53

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1961 (n.d.: 244).

tors that demonstrate a vibrant and efficient public policy in operation, were not evident in the Jharkhand region.

It is also noteworthy that the development profile of the Jharkhand region compared with the whole of Bihar had worsened over the first decade of independent Indian governance. It has been observed that Jharkhand had a better development profile compared to Bihar in 1951, which worsened over this period. Some development indicators continued to be better in Jharkhand than Bihar as a whole in 1961, but the rate of improvement in the decade of 1951–61 was faster in Bihar as a whole than in the Jharkhand region within Bihar.

This was also a period that saw the best popular support for the Jharkhand Party which virtually laid down the law in the region during the decade of 1951–61. The disillusionment with the party began with their failure to convince the SRC of the necessity of creating a state of Jharkhand and manifested itself in declining electoral support in the 1957 and 1962 elections. After this decade, the sway of the Jharkhand parties in the region declined and ended with the Jharkhand Party merging with the INC. This merger marked not only the nadir of the JHP but also signalled the entry of national parties into the region.

Declining Development Profile and Growing Unrest in Tribal Bihar

The year 1967 marked a break in Indian politics in more ways than one. It was the time when the hegemony of the Congress party at the national level began to be challenged, and a true multi-party system started emerging. The reflections of this trend can also be noticed in state-level politics. Undoubtedly, the strangle-

hold that the INC had over national and state-level politics did not simply disappear overnight, but the lines of dissension within the INC began to come into the open. The INC started losing its umbrella character which had enabled it to tower above its opponents in the past. The states began to throw up new regional and other grass-roots political organisations. Leftist politics that had hardly survived under Jawaharlal Nehru began finding roots in various pockets in the country. The "Congress System" (Kothari 1970) began to disintegrate.

Such profound political changes hardly left the Jharkhand region untouched. Apart from the fact that a multiparty system started to emerge in the area, there also emerged strong support for the left parties. Marxist political organisations swiftly moved in to fill the political vacuum which had been created by the collapse of the Jharkhandi political formations. The period also noticed a rise in civil unrest in the industrial centres of south Bihar. Support for the Naxalite movement in the area also led to widespread lawlessness and disorder (see chapter 3). Consequently, president's rule was invoked in Bihar in June 1968. Soon after, a committee[13] was appointed to enquire into the causes of growing unrest in tribal Bihar. This committee cited the declining development profile as a major cause of the unrest. However, the committee was also of the opinion that the role played by the planning process in improving the development profile of Jharkhand region as a whole and that of the adivasi inhabitants in particular could not be evaluated conclusively because:

> the statistics in regard to the plan progress have not been kept on regional basis.... Therefore, it is difficult to make a precise estimate, ... of the extent to which the tribal people have benefited, or failed to benefit, from the implementation of the three plans. Significant developments have, no doubt, taken place in the plateau region. (*Report, Situation in the Tribal Areas* 1968: 37)

The committee observed that the unrest in the Jharkhand region was rooted in the poor growth of opportunities for employment, vocational/technical training, and education. The impact of these problems was accentuated, according to the committee, by "factors such as industrial development, educational advance-

ment, rising prices, growth of political awareness, etc." The committee also noted the continual neglect by the government machinery and underlined the need for planned development of the area and improvement of facilities such as irrigation, drinking water supply, and so on (*Report, Situation in the Tribal Areas* 1968: 8–9).

Further, the report acknowledged that the tribals had the poorest levels of literacy in Bihar. Nevertheless, it also pointed to higher employment in the Jharkhand region compared to the rest of the state. It took particular note of the relatively greater employment level of women, but was equally concerned about the continued overdependence of the population on agricultural occupations in the Jharkhand region (*Report, Situation in the Tribal Areas* 1968: 3–7). These deductions of the committee are in consonance with the analysis of the development profile of Jharkhand in 1961, in the last section.

The committee drew attention to the large-scale land alienation near the industrial townships in the Jharkhand region and regarded it with concern. It was observed that inadequate governmental agricultural credit facilities in Jharkhand ensured that diku moneylenders thrived, which resulted in land alienation and the resultant unrest. The committee was critical of the government policy in this regard and recommended the extension of better agricultural credit facilities (Ibid.: 9–18).

The absence of "responsive and responsible" leadership in Jharkhand was considered to be another important cause of unrest. The committee noted that the political vacuum had enabled "a number of political parties and individuals to fish in troubled waters of Chotanagpur". Commenting on the demand for an autonomous state of Jharkhand, the committee felt that the better-educated persons in the region (a very small minority of them being adivasis) would be the greatest beneficiaries of the creation of the state of Jharkhand or greater reservation for Scheduled Tribes in jobs or educational institutions (Ibid.: 9).

Hence, the conclusions of the committee in 1968 attest to the conclusions arrived at in the last section of this chapter. The next section examines the changes in the development profile of the region in terms of the number of people who benefited during 1961–71.

Development Profile in 1971

Although the political climate of the region had changed drastically between 1961 and 1971, the development profile hardly showed any sign of accelerated growth. The population of both Bihar state and the Jharkhand region had grown since the 1961 census. The decadal growth in the population of Jharkhand was 34 per cent, whereas that of Bihar as a whole was 21 per cent. By 1971, 28 per cent of the total population of Bihar state resided in the Jharkhand region (table 32). Moreover, due to the administrative reorganisation of the districts which formed the Jharkhand region, the total land area of Jharkhand represented 53 per cent of the total area of Bihar (up by approximately 7 per cent since 1961). The proportion of people living in the Jharkhand region in 1971 increased by only 3 per cent compared to 1961 (see table 16). Thus, it is not possible to determine the relative growth rates of the population of the Jharkhand region and Bihar as a whole, given that the Jharkhand region in 1961 was not coterminus with that in 1971.

Table 32: Land area and population in Jharkhand, 1971

	Area (sq. km)	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	91,545	15,601,509	8,009,919	7,591,590
Bihar	173,876	56,353,369	28,846,944	27,506,425
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	52.64	27.68	27.76	27.59

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4, Bihar Part II-A—General Population (Tables A-I, AII, AIII and PCA) (n.d.).

Also, the Jharkhand region was gradually and increasingly becoming more cosmopolitan in character. The diminishing percentage of tribal population noticed in the earlier decade continued in this decade as well. In the decade 1961–71, the tribal component of the population of the Jharkhand region reduced from 33 per cent to 29 per cent (tables 17 and 33). This reduction cannot be attributed to the traditional seasonal economic migration of tribal males to the rest of the country because there was an almost equal decline in both the male and female ST population.

Table 33: Scheduled Tribes population in Jharkhand, 1971

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	4,569,889	2,277,084	2,292,805
Bihar	4,932,767	2,462,265	2,470,502
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	92.64	92.47	92.80
Jharkhand percentage	29.29	28.42	30.20

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4, Bihar Part V-A SC-I IV (Part A & B) and SCI-V (Part)—Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (n.d.).

Moreover, the tribal population of Bihar still predominantly resided in the Jharkhand region. Over 92 per cent of the total tribal population of Bihar lived in Jharkhand in 1971 (table 33) as compared to 94 per cent in 1961 (table 17). This can be attributed to a substantially lower growth rate of the ST population during the 1961–71 decade.

While in the period 1961–71, the demographic profile of the region had altered to some extent, the development profile of the region, barring a few noticeable exceptions, was not significantly different. An important indicator of the development profile is an analysis of the occupational pattern. This indicator attests to a mixed picture of development in the Jharkhand region. However, before embarking on an analysis of this indicator, it must be pointed out that the figures for 1971 are artificially deflated because of a redefinition of categories:

> In the 1971 Census every person was asked what his main activity was.... On the basis of this question, the population was divided into two broad streams of main activity as 'workers' and 'non-workers'.... If the person had participated in any such regular work on any one of the days during this reference period [one week prior to the date of enumeration] and this had been his main activity, the person was categorised accordingly. In the case of seasonal workers, a person's main activity was ascertained with reference to such work in the last one year.... The 1971 Census registered a sharp decline in the work participation rate ... as compared to the 1961 Census.[14]

Therefore, a comparison of actual percentages of workers in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in 1961 and 1971 is of little value.[15] The best that can be done is to compare the percentages of workers in Bihar state that resided in the Jharkhand

region. This will indicate if employment opportunities in Jharkhand had improved in relation to Bihar as a whole.

Table 34 represents the distribution of workers in the two sectors. It shows that the total population gainfully employed in the Jharkhand region was only about 29 per cent of the total population, whereas the same percentage for Bihar was approximately 31 per cent. In consonance with other development indicators, employment opportunities in Bihar as a whole were marginally better than in the Jharkhand region.

Table 34: Percentage share of occupations in Jharkhand, 1971

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	23.67	23.26	25.94	37.96	37.47	43.87
Jharkhand	22.08	35.79	7.62	7.14	13.90	1.22
Bihar	25.82	42.72	8.10	5.20	10.17	0.77

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4 Bihar, Part II-B (i)—General Economic Tables (Tables B-I Part A and B-II) (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators; agricultural labourers; and those in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting & plantations, orchards and allied activities.

[2] Includes those in mining & quarrying; manufacturing, processing, servicing & repairs; construction; trade & commerce; transport, storage and communications and other services.

Moreover, this table also confirms that Jharkhand was more industrialised than Bihar as a whole in 1971. While Jharkhand had only 28 per cent of the total population of Bihar in 1971 (table 32), its share of non-agricultural employment was 38 per cent of the total non-agricultural employment in Bihar state. Also non-agricultural employment in the Jharkhand region was higher than that in Bihar as a whole, as was the share of women employed in such activities.

As far as agricultural activities were concerned, 24 per cent of those employed in agricultural activities in Bihar state in 1971 resided in the Jharkhand region. This figure is slightly smaller than the percentage of population that resided in Jharkhand. In the non-agricultural sector, the percentage of persons engaged in

the Jharkhand region increased from 32 per cent in 1961 to 38 per cent in 1971 (tables 22 and 34). Despite a sharp decline in the numbers of workers enumerated (due to the redefinition of categories), the fact that the percentage of non-agricultural workers rose indicates a greater industrial vitality in the economy of the Jharkhand region. Clearly, the region of Jharkhand was consolidating as the industrial region of Bihar. Thus, a very mixed picture emerges about the occupational patterns in Jharkhand in 1971, but overall there were lesser job opportunities in the Jharkhand region than Bihar as a whole, in 1971. However, as pointed out earlier, due to the redefinition of categories, these deductions from this indicator are of limited use.

As far as the educational level of the working population of the Jharkhand region was concerned, the picture is not very different (table 35). In 1971, 81 per cent of persons employed in agricultural activities and 44 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce were illiterate. The figures for female illiteracy in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors alike in Jharkhand were still higher at 98 per cent and 84 per cent, respectively. Although the level of female illiteracy in Bihar as a whole was quite similar, the figures for total illiteracy in the whole of Bihar were slightly lower. In Bihar state, 78 per cent of the agricultural and 42 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce were illiterate, in 1971.

As is evident from table 35, the educational scenario in Bihar as a whole and the Jharkhand region was poor. However, overall, Bihar state offered a better picture of educational levels amongst the working population. In fact, as far as educational levels in non-agricultural activities in the whole of Bihar were concerned, a better picture emerges. In all educational categories, Bihar had a better educational profile than the Jharkhand region.

Clearly, the performance of public policy in the region of Jharkhand was poorer than in Bihar as a whole. Keeping in mind the fact that in 1951 the Jharkhand region had better educational levels, it appears that in the decades 1951–61 and 1961–71 there was no concerted implementation of public policy in the region with regard to literary and education. The education policy of the government was not able to even maintain the earlier standards, let alone improve the educational level of the workforce.

Table 35: Percentage share of occupations by educational standards in Jharkhand, 1971

Educational standards	*Agriculture-related activities*[4]			*Non-agricultural activities*[5]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
	Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar					
Illiterate	24.53	24.21	25.86	39.51	38.56	45.34
Literate*	20.07	19.88	38.41	29.88	29.85	32.92
Middle school[1]	20.56	20.38	42.23	36.95	36.98	35.24
Matriculate	12.44	12.38	34.96	38.29	38.08	46.01
Intermediate[2]	17.34	17.25	41.66	42.55	43.23	28.62
Graduate and others[3]	9.07	9.07	0	38.28	37.80	40.81
	Jharkhand					
Illiterate	81.27	77.79	98.48	44.00	40.36	84.45
Literate*	6.69	7.89	0.77	11.63	12.54	1.81
Middle school[1]	10.21	12.06	1.03	23.58	25.20	6.02
Matriculate	0.89	1.06	0.04	14.31	15.13	5.44
Intermediate[2]	0.05	0.06	0.002	0.95	1.01	0.35
Graduate and others[3]	0.06	0.07	0	5.49	5.67	3.62
	Bihar					
Illiterate	78.41	74.72	98.80	42.28	39.22	81.71
Literate*	7.89	9.23	0.52	14.78	15.74	2.41
Middle school[1]	11.75	13.76	0.63	24.23	25.54	7.49
Matriculate	1.70	2.00	0.03	14.19	14.89	5.18
Intermediate[2]	0.06	0.08	0.001	0.85	0.87	0.55
Graduate and others[3]	0.15	0.18	0.0004	5.45	5.62	3.25

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4, Bihar Part II-B (ii)—General Economic Tables (Tables B-I Part B, B-II & B-VII to B-IX) (n.d.).

* Without educational level.

[1] Includes primary and middle school.

[2] Includes technical or non-technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree.

[3] Includes those who hold a university graduate or postgraduate degree or an engineering and technology, medical, agricultural, veterinary and dairying or teaching degree.

[4] Includes cultivators; agricultural labourers; and those in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting & plantations, orchards and allied activities.

[5] Includes those in mining and quarrying; manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs; construction; trade & commerce; transport, storage & communications and other services.

It is quite disturbing to find that after two decades of policy planning and implementation, approximately two-thirds of the workforce in Jharkhand was still illiterate in 1971.[16] This could not have but significantly affected the economic opportunities available to the people in the region as well as retarded the rate of economic growth. Other development indicators for the region do not paint a picture that would redeem the neglect of the region with respect to components of policy agenda that have already been discussed.

The falling share of the Jharkhand region in the total agricultural production of Bihar state has been noticed earlier. However, no further comparisons of the agricultural output of the region can be made since the data available in the decade of 1970s does not provide the agricultural output of the districts concerned. Instead, the available data for the districts provides the total hectares under a specified crop (table 36). It must be pointed out that a higher acreage under a certain crop does not necessarily mean a higher production level. This is particularly true in the case of the Jharkhand region where a majority of farmers continue to depend on rainfall alone. It seems that the government of Bihar was guilty of trying to cover up for the falling agricultural output of the Jharkhand region and Bihar as a whole by simply not publishing the relevant data.

However, table 36 makes it clear that there was little effort to produce cash crops in the Jharkhand region. The proportion of cropped area in Jharkhand under marketable crops, such as sugar cane, jute, tobacco and potato, was smaller compared to the area under subsistence crops like rice, wheat, gram, barley or lentils. This indicates that the nature of agricultural activities in the Jharkhand region continued to be that of subsistence farming dependent on seasonal rainfall for its water requirements. Going by the observations made during fieldwork, even in the 1990s, a number of peasants have given up farming because of the low output. They have not been able to find adequate employment elsewhere and therefore have no jobs at all. This pattern of declining employment opportunities in the agricultural sector is not matched by an increase in employment in the non-agricultural sector, in Jharkhand.

With the aim of comparing the relative agricultural performance of the Jharkhand region and Bihar as a whole, another

Table 36: Area under principal crops in Jharkhand, 1974–75 (in thousands of hectares)

	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Gram*	*Barley*	*Maize*	*Masoor*	*Arhar*	*Kesri*	*Peas*	*Sugar cane*	*Potato*	*Tobacco*	*Jute*	*Chilli*
Jharkhand	1,687	74	53	25	191	6	36	15	2	9	23	*	*	1
Bihar	5,228	1,478	248	192	881	146	107	622	28	141	115	9	105	11
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	32.26	5.00	21.37	13.02	21.67	4.10	33.64	2.41	7.14	6.38	20.0	0	0	9.09

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 46–7, 49).
* Nil or less than 500 hectares.

type of statistic available for 1974–75 has been used. The acreage under high yielding varieties (HYV) of crops would indicate the relative efforts undertaken by the planning machinery to increase agricultural production.

As demonstrated in table 37, the Jharkhand region (despite producing a high percentage of the total rice production of Bihar in 1951 and 1961) accounted for only 12 per cent of the total area under HYV of rice in Bihar state, in 1974–75. Since all HYVs require an efficient and plentiful irrigation system, it is pertinent to examine whether there were any improvements in the total irrigated area of Jharkhand and the sources of irrigation.

Table 37: Area under high yielding variety crops in Jharkhand, 1974–75 (in acres)

	Rice	*Wheat*
Jharkhand	176,449	91,754
Bihar	1,506,974	2,152,963
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	11.70	4.26

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 44).

As table 38 illustrates, in 1973–74 the Jharkhand region accounted for only 8 per cent of the total irrigated area of Bihar, whereas in 1961–62 its share had been 12 per cent (table 26). There was in fact an actual decline in the total irrigated area in the Jharkhand region from 230,676 hectares in 1961–62 to 176,000 hectares in 1973–74. This reduction in the irrigation capacity is noticeable across all sources of irrigation, with the exception of government canals and wells.

The percentage of land area irrigated by government canals in the Jharkhand region increased from 5 per cent in 1961–62 to 19 per cent in 1973–74 (tables 26 and 38). However, this four-fold increase was not very significant in actual terms, since only 24,000 more hectares were irrigated by government canals and the total irrigated area had fallen in real terms. Tanks formed a large source of irrigation in 1961–62, but by 1973–74, the extent of land irrigated by tanks had also fallen considerably and formed only 19 per cent (compared with 39 per cent in 1961–62) of an already reduced total irrigated area. The fact that the

Table 38: Area irrigated from different sources in Jharkhand, 1973–74 (in hectares)

	Government canals	*Private canals*	*Tanks*	*Wells/tube wells*	*Other sources*	*Total area irrigated*
Jharkhand	34,000	2,000	33,000	45,000	60,000	176,000
Bihar	896,000	4,000	82,000	717,000	621,000	2,316,000
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	3.79	50	40.24	6.27	9.66	7.59
Jharkhand percentage	19.31	1.13	18.75	25.56	34.09	–
Bihar percentage	38.68	0.17	3.54	30.95	29.81	–

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 40–1).
Note: Totals may not tally due to rounding up of figures to the nearest 1,000 in the source.

total area irrigated by government canals in the Jharkhand region actually went up in real terms is the only indicator of any efforts to improve the irrigation capacity of the region and thereby the agricultural output.

The patterns for Bihar as a whole show a rather different picture. The area irrigated from all sources except the area irrigated by government canals declined in Bihar, yet there was net increase in the total irrigated area of Bihar between 1960–61 and 1973–74. Over this period, the total irrigation capacity of the whole of Bihar had increased considerably, from 1,943,000 hectares to 2,316,000 hectares. Thus, there seems to have been a greater success in the implementation of irrigation programmes in Bihar as a whole, but quite the reverse in the Jharkhand region. This indicates a gross failure of implementation of policy and a reduced effectiveness of public policy initiatives in Jharkhand region, during the period 1960–61 to 1973–74.

Another related factor which has a bearing on the performance of public policy with regard to agriculture in the region is the availability of governmental agricultural finance. The *Report on the Situation in Tribal Areas of Bihar* (1968) singled out this area for its critical remarks. Table 39 shows that a greater volume of governmental agricultural finance was available in the Jharkhand region in 1972–73 compared to 1959–60. From only 4 per cent in 1959–60 (table 24), the percentage had risen to 16 per cent by 1972–73. This was a substantial rise in both actual as well as relative terms. However, it was still far below the amount required to improve agriculture in the region. Jharkhand accounted for 52 per cent of the total land area of Bihar and more than a quarter of the total population of Bihar in 1970–71, but the total agricultural finances disbursed by the government in the region was only about 16 per cent of the total. The figure becomes even more insignificant when the landscape of Jharkhand is taken into account.

Despite the poor efforts at improving agricultural production in the region, the contribution of Jharkhand to the total agricultural income-tax collection in Bihar had risen. By 1975–76, the agricultural income tax collected from the Jharkhand region formed 10 per cent of the total, (compared to 6 per cent in 1961–62) (table 29). In fact, the actual figures had increased by almost

Table 39: Land improvement loans to agriculturists in Jharkhand, 1972–73#

	Loans advanced (Rs.)
Jharkhand	9,223,910
Bihar	57,918,086
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	15.92

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 152).
Under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, Natural Calamities Loan and Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884.

two and a half times (tables 29 and 40). Despite the modest amount of money involved (which is even smaller in real terms when inflation is taken into account), the above figures indicate a better realisation of agricultural revenues from the Jharkhand region compared with Bihar as a whole.

Table 40: Collection of agricultural income tax in Jharkhand, 1975–76

	Tax collected (Rs.)
Jharkhand	170,000
Bihar	1,778,000
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	9.56

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 159).

The high share of the Jharkhand region in the revenues collected in Bihar is also shown in tables 41 and 42. Only 16 per cent of the total number of villages electrified in Bihar state were in the Jharkhand region in 1973 (table 41). The electrification of a village is pertinent in the development profile of the region because farmers have greater access to underground water for irrigation purposes.

As table 38 shows, only 6 per cent of the total area irrigated by wells (including tube wells) in Bihar was in the Jharkhand region in 1973–74. This can be explained by the low percentage of villages with electricity that lie in the region. However, despite this poor level of electrification of villages, the contribution of the Jharkhand region to the tax collected on electricity was quite

Table 41: Number of villages electrified in Jharkhand, 1973*

	Number of villages electrified
Jharkhand	1,485
Bihar	9,280
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	16.00

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 234).
* As on 31 March 1973.

Table 42: Collection of revenues under Electricity Act 1948 in Jharkhand, 1975–76

	Tax collected (Rs.)
Jharkhand	60,686,000
Bihar	86,256,000
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	70.35

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 159).

high. In the year 1975–76, Jharkhand contributed more than 70 per cent of the total taxes on electricity (table 42). Due to the poor scope for consumption of electricity on account of irrigation, most of the tax must have been collected from the industrial sector. However, in view of the fact that there was no substantial rise in employment in the non-agricultural sector in the previous decade or so, a chequered picture emerges. It seems that the region of Jharkhand had not only become the predominant industrial region in Bihar but had also become an internal colony of the state, where the policy efforts to promote development investment, agricultural development and employment generation were meagre but the level of tax realisation was high.

This pattern of declining public policy performance in the Jharkhand region can also be noticed in the rate of expansion of the PWD road network. There was, indeed, a larger network of roads in Jharkhand in 1977–78 (table 43) compared to 1960 (table 31), but the region accounted for only 33 per cent of the total road length in Bihar state (compared to 38 per cent in 1960). The rate of growth of road network in the Jharkhand region was slower than in Bihar as a whole.

Table 43: Length of PWD roads in Jharkhand, 1977–78

	Total length of PWD roads (km)*
Jharkhand	5,005
Bihar	15,026
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	33.30

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 197).
* Includes state highways, major district roads and other divisional roads. National highways' district-wise break-up is unavailable.

Rayati transfers and the rate of land alienation amongst the tribal peasants is another facet in the maze of development problems in the Jharkhand region. Compared to 1961 (table 27), there were a greater numbers of partial transfers of land in Jharkhand in 1974 (table 44). However for Bihar as a whole, the number of partial transfers declined by 1974. This indicates a pattern in Jharkhand of sale of part of landholdings to secure resources to buy agricultural inputs for the rest of the land, or possibly distress selling for current needs.

In 1974, the average area of land transferred per district, as regards partial transfer of land, was smaller in the Jharkhand region than in Bihar as a whole (table 44). The same pattern is repeated in the cases of transfers of entire holdings. Keeping in mind the low amount of average rent payable to landlords and the general state of agricultural development in the Jharkhand region, it is more likely that there were not many buyers of land. There is a likelihood that in Jharkhand, more peasants wanted to sell their holdings than those who wanted to buy agricultural land. In such a situation, alienation of land,[17] whether legal or illegal, cannot be ruled out. Unfortunately, the statistics for moneylenders are not available for this period, but keeping in mind the general pattern of the region till then and the declining state of agriculture in the region, it is quite plausible that there was a rise in distress selling or forced transfers. Many impoverished peasants were likely to sell their holdings, in part or full, for current expenses or to pay for forced economic migration to other parts of India.

In sum, the decade of the 1960s saw almost an all-round deterioration in the development profile of the Jharkhand region, both in itself and in relation to Bihar as a whole. During the

Table 44: Average figures for registered deeds of sale of *rayati* holdings having occupancy rights, per district, in Jharkhand, 1974

	Entire				*In part*			
	Number	*Area transferred (in acres)*	*Annual rent payable to landlord (Rs.)*	*Consideration money (Rs.)*	*Number*	*Area transferred (in acres)*	*Annual rent payable to landlord (Rs.)*	*Consideration money (Rs.)*
Jharkhand	183.14	192.85	264.28	–*	25,619.71	11,907.14	18,634.57	–*
Bihar	3,036.14	1,417.48	5,711,90	–*	26,359.06	26,347.45	36,949.74	–*

Source: Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1978 (n.d.: 192).
* Figures for very few districts are available.

earlier decade, there were some indicators which had performed better than others in Jharkhand. However, during this decade, most development indicators had worsened. The earlier scenario of Jharkhand contributing more than its fair share to the state exchequer but not receiving an equally high investment of development funds from the public policy machinery continued. As noted earlier, Jharkhand appears to have emerged as an internal colony of Bihar.

Development Profile of Scheduled Tribes, 1961–71

In the development scenario of the Jharkhand region, a brief analysis of the changes in the development profile of the Scheduled Tribes population is important.[18] Although the ST population in Jharkhand was only about a third of the total population, the tribals were still the most cohesive political group in the region. Furthermore, since the Jharkhand movement was premised on (and still draws upon) tribal history, culture, heritage and symbolism, it is pertinent to trace the development profile of the tribal people.

The census of 1961 was the first to enumerate detailed socio-economic statistics for the tribal population. Hence, there is no detailed comparable data for 1951 apart from basic population figures. In 1961, more than 93 per cent of the tribal population of Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region, which was an increase over the 1951 figures of 85 per cent (tables 2 and 17). This indicates that the tribal population of Bihar was increasingly concentrated in the Jharkhand region. The administrative reorganisation of the districts of Jharkhand also had a part to play in this density of tribal population in the region.

Besides, more than 90 per cent of the Scheduled Tribes employed in agricultural as well as non-agricultural occupations in Bihar in 1961 were resident in Jharkhand (table 45). As far as the ST males in Jharkhand were concerned, only 48 per cent of them (compared to 52 per cent of the ST women) worked in agricultural activities. The figures for women's occupational patterns were higher in agricultural employment. Presumably, more ST men had by now ventured out of the Jharkhand region in search of jobs, leaving behind their families. Seasonal economic migration of

tribal men to the rest of the country to work as labourers was nothing new. The higher non-agricultural employment of ST males in Jharkhand indicates that they were also looking for industrial employment in greater numbers than ST females.

Table 45: Percentage share of occupations of Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand, 1961

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	90.51	85.67	95.34	90.47	89.96	91.55
Jharkhand	49.47	47.61	52.18	7.03	9.56	4.54
Bihar	51.65	51.98	51.33	7.27	9.93	4.65

Source: *Census of India 1961, vol. IV, Bihar Part V-A—Special Tables for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes* (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators and agricultural labourers.

[2] Includes those in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, household industry; manufacturing other than household industry; construction; trade and commerce; transport, storage and communication; and other services.

As far as the occupational pattern of tribals in the Jharkhand region is concerned, table 45 tells us that in 1961, 49 per cent of the ST population was still working in agricultural occupations and a mere 7 per cent found non-agricultural employment. More ST women depended on agricultural occupations than men, and women's employment level in non-agricultural occupations was almost half that of men. In sum, it is clear that the hopes expressed in the Constituent Assembly that within a decade the tribal population, aided by reservations and positive discrimination, would come up to the level of the rest of the population were belied.

Matters did not change dramatically during the next decade. More than 92 per cent of the total ST population of Bihar and more than 96 per cent of tribals employed in agricultural or non-agricultural activities resided in the Jharkhand region (tables 33 and 46). The occupational pattern of Scheduled Tribes in the Jharkhand region in 1971 again indicates fewer occupational

opportunities in Jharkhand. The overdependence of the ST population in Jharkhand on agricultural activities was, once again, very evident. In 1971, 31 per cent of the ST population was engaged in agricultural activities, whereas only 3 per cent were employed in non-agricultural activities. Despite the redefinition of categories, this overwhelming pattern testifies to the above conclusions; it indicates that the ST population was not getting even the unskilled jobs in the industrial sector.

Table 46: Percentage share of occupations of Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand, 1971

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	96.71	92.14	0.17	96.29	97.45	91.90
Jharkhand	31.38	50.66	12.23	3.12	5.02	1.24

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4, Bihar Part V-A SC-I-IV (Part A & B) and ST I-V (Part A & B),—Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators; agricultural labourers and those in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting & plantations, orchards and allied activities.

[2] Includes those in mining & quarrying; manufacturing, processing, servicing & repairs; construction; trade & commerce; transport, storage & communications and other services.

The lack of success of the development policies with regard to the STs is also reflected in their educational level figures (table 47). Despite more than two decades of the operation of reservation and positive discrimination to secure rapid educational improvement amongst them, the majority of STs in Jharkhand were still illiterate in 1971, the figure being 88 per cent. The situation in Jharkhand was worse with regard to women: 95 per cent were illiterate. Moreover, of the 12 per cent ST population that was thus literate or educated, 6 per cent were merely literate without any further education level. It is likely that many in this group had acquired literacy through their individual efforts and not because of any successful implementation of an education policy.

It is noteworthy that in 1971, only 0.71 per cent of the total ST population of Jharkhand was matriculate or above and 6 per cent

Table 47: Percentage share of educational levels among Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand, 1971

	Illiterate			*Literate*[1]			*Middle school*[2]			*Matriculate and above*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	92.02	91.39	92.56	95.24	94.65	97.36	95.67	95.08	98.02	94.76	94.25	97.06
Jharkhand	87.76	80.59	94.89	5.74	8.93	2.57	5.52	8.81	2.26	0.71	1.17	0.26

Source: Census of India 1971, Series 4, Bihar Part V-A (SCI-IV Part A & B; SCI-V Part)—Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (n.d.).

[1] Without educational level.

[2] Primary or junior basic.

was educated up to middle school. Further, only 3 per cent of ST women were literate and another 2 per cent were educated up to middle school. Only 0.26 per cent of the ST women in Jharkhand were educated up to matriculation or higher. This indicates an extremely modest success of the policy of positive discrimination in favour of the ST population. The pattern that emerges from the above data indicates that there was only a small improvement in the availability of employment opportunities for the Scheduled Tribes and their educational levels had also shown only a modest improvement.

In the overall analysis, many development indicators had deteriorated in the Jharkhand region. Amongst the few that did show an improvement, the rate of growth was much slower than that of Bihar as a whole. The public policy machinery had failed to implement a sustainable and balanced development programme in the Jharkhand region during the period 1951–71.

Notes

1. President of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (Soren).
2. Interview with a panchayat head in the Sonahatu development block in Ranchi in May 1996.
3. Real development problems also need to be perceived by the population and articulated into political demand making. However, here attention is being drawn to the fact that a situation can exist where the population or an ethnic identity perceives that there is deterioration in the development profile of the region (or feels discriminated against), without there actually being such a deterioration (or discrimination).
4. For greater readability, the percentage figures have been rounded off to the nearest whole number in the text. The actual percentage correct to two decimal places has been included in the tables.
5. The 1951 census differed from the earlier ones because "the 1941 table gave distribution of population of each district by the main communities, this table gives distribution of population of each district according to ... livelihood classes" (*Census of India 1951* n.d., 1: 333). The 1951 census classified the population according to self-supporting, non-earning dependent and earning dependent in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. Therefore, the figures for livelihood classes are classification of the entire population and not workers, as in the later years. The figures for workers for this year (table 14A) have been arrived at by subtracting the non-earning

dependants from the figures for the categories of agricultural and non-agricultural livelihood classes. These are the closest figures that can be calculated for the category of workers in the two sectors for 1951.

6. These figures also indicate a higher workforce participation rate in Jharkhand and, therefore, a better employment scenario.
7. This approach to development administration, by making a block the smallest unit for implementation of development policy, formed the basis for the Tribal Development Blocks under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) from the Fifth Five Year Plan onwards.
8. This administrative reorientation was the result of the implementation of the SRC's recommendations as well as the internal reorganisation of the districts of Bihar.
9. The concept of 'Work' was introduced in the 1961 census in accordance with the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation. This census enumerated regular workers as well as seasonal workers. A regular worker was a person who was employed in his/her main activity for "any of the fifteen days preceding the day" of enumeration. A seasonal worker was enumerated as employed if he/she had more than one hour of work for the "greater part of the working season" (*Census of India 1951* n.d., 1: 333).
10. Although it is common for matriculates in most countries to seek non-agricultural employment, the situation in Jharkhand attains salience because these matriculates frequently do not find any non-agricultural work. Nonetheless, they are reluctant to take up agricultural employment as it is considered to be below the dignity of a matriculate to work on land. There is almost an absence of public policy effort to provide incentives for educated persons to work in agricultural activities. This middle-level education combined with prejudice against agricultural activities has, thus, made a large section of the youth 'non-workers', adding to the rising unemployment.
11. The Jharkhand region being a plateau, wasteland development requires greater efforts here. While the rest of Bihar is largely plains and has been under the plough for centuries, the terrain of Jharkhand is hilly and overgrown and there is plenty of scope for agricultural extension.
12. Rainfall has a bearing on all sources of irrigation. However, there is a difference between the farmers depending exclusively on rain to irrigate their fields and the low water level in canals, reservoirs and so on, due to poor rainfall. The low level of irrigation from man-made means indicates a poor development policy effort in the Jharkhand region.
13. The committee was made up of the secretaries to the departments of welfare, labour and employment, education, appointments and political, and submitted its report in November 1968.

14. *Census of India 1991, Series 1, Paper 3 of 1991, Provisional Population Tables: Workers and their Distribution* (1991: 2.3–2.5). As noted earlier, the 1961 census had enumerated individuals as workers if *(a)* they were employed for one day over the past 15 days and *(b)* in case of seasonal work, if they found at least one hour of work over the "greater part of the 'working season'". The redefinition of categories in the 1971 census reduced the number of workers enumerated in the 1971 census compared to the 1961 census.
15. The higher number of workers enumerated by the 1961 census leads to a misleading picture, as the figures fell significantly when the category of workers was redefined in 1971. However, the comparative analysis of the Jharkhand region and Bihar as a whole still holds true as the same definition was applied to both the regions.
16. Notwithstanding the redefinition of categories in 1971, even if the new categories are analysed without reference to the previous census, the conclusions hold true.
17. It hardly matters whether this alienation is de facto or de jure as by now some tribals had also become rich moneylenders. The effect of any alienation is the same on the development profile of Jharkhand: more tribals begin to look for the non-existent non-agricultural employment.
18. Since an overwhelming majority of the ST population lived and worked in the Jharkhand region, it is of very little value to dwell on the employment patterns of STs in the whole of Bihar.

5

Changing Patterns in the Development Profile of Jharkhand: 1970s to 1990s

The meagre impact of the operation of the development policies in the Jharkhand region during the period 1951–71 led to a heightening of socio-economic conflict and unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s (chapter 3). Such societal and politico-economic unrest undermined the legitimacy of the regime, and the State increasingly resorted to institutional and open coercion to implement its will. Consequently, the government realised the pressing need to ameliorate matters in the Jharkhand region. Beginning with the Fifth Five Year Plan, there was a reorientation in the planning process which significantly affected the development profile of the ST population of the Jharkhand region. This reorientation of the development strategy began with the appointment of the Study Team on Tribal Development Blocks headed by Shilo Ao, in 1969, to review the strategy for tribal development. The study team was scathing in its report on the state of tribal development in the country, and its conclusions along with those reached by the committee on Situation in the Tribal Areas of Bihar, 1968 (chapter 4) led to a reorientation in the strategy of development for the tribals of Bihar.

New Approach to Tribal Development

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1976–77 to 1980–81) sought to alter the approach to development activities in the Jharkhand region. A new method of delivery was adopted which targeted the tribal population. This approach came to be called the Modified Area

Development Approach (MADA). Under MADA, a predetermined percentage of the plan outlay for Bihar was earmarked for areas of high tribal concentration. This came to be called the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP).

Under TSP, the districts of Ranchi and Singhbhum; Latehar subdivision and Bhandaria block of Garhwa subdivision of Palamu district; and Dumka, Pakur, Rajmahal and Jamatra subdivisions and Sunarpahari and Boarijore blocks of Godda subdivisions of Santhal Pargana district were identified for the implementation of MADA. The idea behind MADA was to identify pockets of these districts which had more than 50 per cent of the tribal population of the district and undertake concerted measures to accelerate development in these areas. In all, 112 blocks were included, covering 43,792 sq. km (25 per cent of total area of Bihar), and were grouped into fourteen Integrated Tribal Development Programmes (ITDP). Each ITDP was placed under a project officer. Advisory committees made up of local officials and non-officials were set up to aid the project officers in the formulation and implementation of development schemes.

Another forty-three pockets of tribal concentration were identified in forty-one blocks in Palamu (non-TSP area), Santhal Pargana (non-TSP area), Hazaribagh, Giridih, Dhanbad, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Kathiar, Rohtas, and West Champaran districts, to be brought under MADA. Between them, these areas covered approximately 4,255,000 tribals (86 per cent of the total tribal population of Bihar).

Efforts were also made to streamline the administration of the new approach to tribal development. A branch secretariat under the control of the regional development commissioner was set up at Ranchi to ensure expeditious sanctioning of sub-plan schemes. This was applicable to twenty-nine decentralised departments such as agriculture, animal husbandry, dairy, education, health, water supply and others. Furthermore, additional heads of departments were posted to Ranchi to ensure speedy and efficient implementation of the programmes under the TSP. Originally, 14 per cent of the state plan outlay was earmarked for the funding of the TSP schemes. In 1977–78 this was raised to 17 per cent. Table 48 shows the outlay and expenditure[1] incurred under

Table 48: Tribal Sub-Plan component of the Bihar Fifth Five Year Plan, 1976–81

Year	*Outlay (lakh Rs.)*		*TSP as per cent of the state plan**	*Expenditure (lakh Rs.)*		*TSP as per cent of the state plan*
	State plan	*TSP*		*State plan*	*TSP*	
1976–77	25,514	3,627.15	14.0	24,945.91	3,236.86	13.0
1977–78	28,232	4,916.91	17.0	26,558.48	4,029.82	15.0
1978–79	34,285	6,000.00	17.0	31,346.10	3,764.93	12.0
1979–80	37,652	6,628.00	18.0	31,879.50	4,387.86	14.0
1980–81	47,661	9,008.90	19.0	NA	NA	NA
1976–77 to 1980–81 Total/Average	173,344	30,180.96	17.0	114,729.99	15,419.47	10.8

Source: Draft Sixth Five-year Plan, 1980–85 (n.d.: xix).

TSP during the Fifth Five Year Plan (*Draft Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1980–85* n.d.: xix).

While the Fifth Five Year Plan was underway, a committee called the National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas was appointed by the Planning Commission to evaluate the development policies and their effectiveness in the backward areas of the country. It reported on the eve of the Sixth Plan in 1981, and its report on the development of tribal areas is pertinent for our analysis not only in what it recommended but also in what it chose to say on the state of development until then. The national committee concurred with the report of the Study Team on Tribal Development Blocks headed by Shilo Ao—which had led to the TSP/MADA approach to tribal development in the Fifth Plan—and observed that

> while it cannot be denied that much work has been done and considerable sums of money have been spent in the field of tribal welfare during the three plan periods, it is difficult to assess the success achieved [due] to the absence of the data regarding per capita income or the indebtedness of tribal communities. . . . what does appear clear to the Team after a study of the tribal development programmes, . . . is that progress is to be judged by what remains to be done to bring the tribals on par with the rest of the population, the leeway to be made up is still considerable and the delay in the implementation of considered recommendation . . . in the past . . . has worsened the position which these recommendations were intended to correct while the failure to pay attention to and profit by their advice on matters pertaining to the formulation and implementation of tribal development programmes has resulted in the failure of ambitious schemes and consequent wastage of valuable resources.[2]

The national committee was also critical of the way in which the evaluation and implementation of development programmes for such areas was treated. It commented that

> under the Constitution, the Union Government's responsibility for administration of the Schedule *(sic)* Areas extends not only to supplementing of funds for their development but also in guiding the State Governments and giving directions to them. The Union Government have so far not issued any directive to the State Governments. They have relied only on persuading the State Governments to adopt appropriate policies for the development of the tribal areas. Further, the

> Governor is also required to submit to the President of India a Report annually regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas in his State. These Reports, however, are rather irregular in submission. Also in course of time, they have tended to become routine administrative reports. The Governors in the light of the Constitutional provision have to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers. Thus, these annual reports are like 'State Reports'. (*Report, Development of Tribal Areas* 1981: para. 1.3)

Clearly, the committee was unhappy with the way in which the development of tribal areas had been sidelined in the past five year plans leading to the worsening of an already poor situation.

Moreover, the committee was also critical of the approach of the TSP which was aimed at tribal families. It was of the opinion that with regard to "programmes like agriculture, horticulture, forestry, soil conservation, minor irrigation, etc. Social Welfare Services, drinking Water, appropriate infrastructural programmes, etc." such an approach held little value. It opined that "the approach has to be an 'Integrated area Development Approach'". On the performance of government's agricultural and allied programmes, the committee was of the view that such programmes "in these areas have so far followed the pattern adopted for the developed areas. Therefore, it has not touched even the fringe of the problem in these areas" (*Report, Development of Tribal Areas* 1981: paras. 4.20–4.27). About educational improvements in the tribal areas, the national committee pointed to the lacunae in the methods, content and organisation of the policy-delivery mechanism. It was of the opinion that "the educational authorities and others sometimes tend to over simplify the issue by partial analysis of the problem and generally conclude the discussion with solutions which may be too idealistic or too expensive. There are no short cuts to effective administration and situation of organisational failure cannot be corrected by providing higher capital investments" (Ibid.: para. 191).

The report was also critical of the administrative inability of the state governments to invest the relatively modest allocations that were made for development activities in such areas. It pointed out the failure of the public policy mechanism to adapt the programmes to suit the individual tribal areas and the overdependence on the sectoral allocation of programmes. It observed that

"there have been savings even in the limited resources allocated for the Sub-Plan areas and funds have not been fully utilised." Besides, the committee was critical of the slow rate and method of disbursement of agricultural credit and the increasing land alienation. The committee, therefore, recommended administrative overhaul to ensure efficient and urgent utilisation of resources (*Report, Development of Tribal Areas* 1987: para. 191).

Hence, the committee blamed the public policy delivery mechanism for the worsening development profile in the tribal areas. It almost called the entire public policy towards the tribal areas a failure. The authoritative conclusions of this committee were broadly similar to the ones arrived at in chapter 4.

However, the impact of this rather radical review of the policy has yet to emerge. Without doubt, there was a declining development profile and whatever improvements were noticed proved temporary and piecemeal in the long run. Despite such criticism, the TSP and MADA approach to tribal development continued unabated. A complete reorientation of the policy planning and delivery mechanism for development in the tribal areas was required, but the government chose to pump in more money despite the modest success of the MADA. The socio-political dimensions of the defects in development policy implementation in the Jharkhand region were not taken into account. Hence, the modest success rate achieved by the MADA and the TSP were not in consonance with the high levels of fiscal allocations.

However, the target-group approach under the MADA did yield some results as far as the development profile of the region was concerned (details of improvement in the development profile under MADA have been discussed in the subsequent section of this chapter). In fact, the Tribal Sub-Plan was the only component of development planning that yielded noticeable results. However, as has been discussed earlier, the tribals were increasingly becoming a numerical minority in the Jharkhand region. Hence, these policy efforts to target only the Scheduled Tribes did not serve the purpose of benefiting the majority of the population of Jharkhand. What was required, perhaps, was an effort aimed at the development of the entire Jharkhand region and its entire population, irrespective of their tribal origins or otherwise.

The TSP resulted in significant improvements in the tribal population's educational and employment standards in the period 1971–81 (examined in the next section). Subsequently, because of the noticeable success in addressing at least some of the problems of the tribal people in the Jharkhand region, the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980–85) tried to reach out further under TSP. The allocation of funds for the TSP rose from 17 per cent of the Bihar State Plan in the Fifth Five Year Plan to 21 per cent in the Sixth Plan (*Draft Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1980–85* n.d.: xix–xx). The outlay under the Sixth Five Year Plan in Bihar and the outlay for the TSP under broad development heads are listed in table 49.

The largest allocation under the TSP in the Sixth Plan was for irrigation and power which was clearly crucial for agricultural production and generation of employment in both the agricultural as well as the non-agricultural sectors. Under this head, the majority of the funds were allocated to increasing the irrigation potential. This reflected the centrality of agricultural activities in the economic life of the TSP area and the poor availability of assured irrigation in the previous decades.

The second largest allocation of TSP funds was for social and community services.[3] Under social and community services, the largest allocation was made to education (more than Rs. 6,000 lakh).[4] The educational levels of the ST had been improving significantly during the previous sub-plan and it seemed logical to invest in an area where the policy implementation apparatus had made some inroads. The second largest allocation was for water supply and the third largest was for SC, ST and Backward Classes. The analysis of the development profile till 1971 (chapter 4) reflected the dire need to provide safe drinking water in order to improve public health and hygiene and prevent the spread of curable diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea (which had a significant share in the total number of deaths in the Jharkhand region). Some improvements had been made in this area, but a lot was left to be achieved. Thus, the largest financial allocations were concentrated on those heads of development which had responded positively to the efforts of the TSP and were crucial in the development profile of the region (table 49).

The third largest allocation in the flow to the TSP was for agriculture and allied activities. The policy planners had realised the

Table 49: Bihar state plan outlay and its TSP component in the Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980–85

Department head	Sixth Five Year Plan 1980–85 (lakhs of Rs.)		TSP outlay as percentage of Bihar plan outlay
	State plan outlay	Flow to TSP	
Agriculture and allied activities	55,588.38	16,169.50	29.08
Co-operation	2,675.00	875.00	32.71
Irrigation, flood control and power	198,312.33	32,239.32	16.25
Industry and minerals	16,025.06	3,313.50	20.67
Transport and communication	39,519.00	7,385.25	18.68
Social and community services	58,347.75	17,154.45	29.40
Economic services	380.00	67.00	17.63
General services	4,550.00	898.00	19.73
Total	375,397.52	78,102.02	20.80

Source: Draft Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1980–85 (n.d.: lxvi–lxix).

need to focus on agricultural activities since it still provided the largest source of employment to both tribals and non-tribals in the Jharkhand region. Amongst the numerous subheads of allocation under agriculture and allied activities,[5] the largest subhead in terms of funds allocation was that of minor irrigation (more than Rs. 8,000 lakh). As has been noted earlier, the agricultural performance of Jharkhand had been deteriorating. The worsening of irrigation potential had meant poorer agricultural output as well as the dim possibility of using HYV seeds. Minor irrigation was recognised as a thrust area by the planners. The second and third largest subheads (under agriculture and allied activities) were forest and crop husbandry with an allocation of more than Rs. 1,270 lakh and Rs. 1,180 lakh respectively. Both these subheads were also salient in economic terms because the occupations under these subheads fall within agricultural occupations which employed most people in the Jharkhand region.

Development planning in Bihar state and the Jharkhand region continued within the framework of MADA in the Seventh Five Year Plan. Whether it was able to effect substantial changes in the development profile of the region is another matter. The obser-

vations made by the National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas had very little effect on the pace of development in the region. By this time, forty-two such pockets spread over thirty-eight development blocks had been identified for the implementation of MADA, covering 83 per cent of the total tribal population of the state (*Bihar Tribal Sub-Plan, 1985–90* n.d.: 1.3). As far as development indicators such as educational and literacy levels of the tribal and general population, occupational patterns and demographic profile of the region were concerned, the Draft Seventh Five Year Plan quotes from the census of 1981 which presents a dismal picture.

Commenting on the infrastructural level of the region, the Draft Seventh Five Year Plan points to the fact that only 20 per cent of the villages in the region had been electrified till 1984–85 and that "this position compared very unfavourably with the State as a whole where 48 per cent of the villages have already been electrified". Moreover, the draft plan points out that although the per capita level of consumption of electricity in the region was highest in the state, "it is mainly because of consumption by several large and medium industries and mining complexes. As such the per capita consumption rate is not a correct indicator of the relative poverty or prosperity of the region. More attention is required to be paid to rural electrification in the tribal areas" (*Bihar Tribal Sub-Plan, 1985–90* n.d.: 1.24). Clearly, one cannot hope for much development to have occurred in the region.

The draft plan does not provide detailed comparative data on the irrigation potential of the region. It merely points out that about 2.48 lakh hectares of irrigation potential had been created by the Sixth Five Year Plan in the TSP area. It also lists four irrigation projects which were launched under the Sixth Plan and informs us that out of 24 minor irrigation projects that were under way, about 10 were completed (*Bihar Tribal Sub-Plan, 1985–90* n.d.: 1.25–1.26, 17.77).

As far as health facilities are concerned, the Draft Seventh Plan lists the minor advances made in the existing and new health centres but acknowledged that "except at Jamshedpur the bed-strength in all Sub-Divisional hospitals is below norm" (*Bihar Tribal Sub-Plan, 1985–90* n.d.: 1.29). About education, the plan speaks of achieving the enrolment targets, but does not enlighten

us about student retention rates and the educational levels achieved by them.

The planned outlay under the TSP during the Seventh Five Year Plan is tabulated in table 50. The TSP component of the Bihar state plan in terms of percentage of plan outlay was increased substantially from 21 per cent in the Sixth Five Year Plan to 24 per cent in the Seventh Five Year Plan (tables 49 and 50). The reason for this rise cannot be ascertained conclusively, although the better performance of development policy (discussed in the next section of this chapter) among the tribal population, under MADA, certainly had a role to play.

Table 50: Outlay under various development heads for the TSP area in the Bihar Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985–90

Development head	*Seventh Five Year Plan 1985–90*		*TSP outlay as percentage of Bihar plan outlay*
	State plan outlay (lakhs of Rs.)	*State plan's contribution to TSP (lakhs of Rs.)*	
Agriculture and allied activities (including minor irrigation)	99,940.00	23,096.50	23.11
Co-operation	3,200.00	972.00	30.37
Water and power development	251,400.00	65,146.80	25.91
Industrial and mineral development	21,600.00	4,844.50	22.42
Transport and communication	40,310.00	6,853.00	17.00
Social and community service	86,685.00	21,628.05	24.95
Miscellaneous	6,865.00	1,427.00	20.78
Total	510,000.00	123,967.85	24.30

Source: Bihar Tribal Sub-Plan, 1985–90 (n.d.: 6.4).

As in the Sixth Five Year Plan (table 49), development of power and irrigation projects (table 50) received the biggest share in funds allocation in the Seventh Five Year Plan. These projects were of prime importance to the region in encouraging

both agricultural as well as non-agricultural economic activity. The second and the third largest allocation were to agricultural and allied activities and social and community services, respectively. These were the heads where expenditure was required to encourage agricultural production (and thereby improve employment levels) as well as to promote literacy, education and socio-economic development of the region.

The effect of this increased percentage allocation to development activities in the TSP area cannot be known due to absence of the detailed indicators for the later years. On the basis of available data, it can be inferred that the operation of the Seventh Plan did not alter the development profile of the region to a substantial extent. This has been confirmed by the data that has been published for the decade. The detailed socio-economic indicators of the region in 1991 had not been published (at the time the study was completed), but a preliminary pattern can be discerned.

Thus, despite the tall promises of the development policy planners and the policy machinery itself, the brief interlude of slightly faster growth in development indicators during 1971–81 was quickly reversed. By 1991, the development profile of the Jharkhand region had all but returned to the pre-1971 levels. It is clear that the success of public policy initiatives in the region was restricted to very few sectors.

However, the policy planning mechanism showed a remarkable lack of ability to respond to the situation. It continued the old approach under the Eighth Five Year Plan by allocating more money in an attempt to reverse the slowdown in the growth of development indicators (discussed in the next section of the chapter) during the Seventh Plan. The TSP approach continued during the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990–95). A comparison of tables 50 and 51 shows a small rise in the allocation of resources to the TSP. However, in its review of the Seventh Plan, the Draft Eighth Five Year Plan did not overcome the deficiencies pointed out in such reviews earlier. It provided us with details such as the hike in scholarships for ST students, the enrolment targets met at schools, number of hospitals established and so on, but gave no clue about the functioning of these schemes. It is not very useful to dwell on the details of the Draft Eighth Five Year Plan

since it has been noticed earlier, and also commented upon by the committees appointed to review the implementation of development programmes, that higher allocation of resources does not automatically lead to a faster rate of change in the development profile.

However, the percentage of allocation and the increase or decrease in them may reflect the thrust areas of the State's policy machinery.

As enumerated in tables 50 and 51, a rise can be noticed in the percentage of state plan outlay that was invested in the TSP area under all the major heads of development. There was a particularly large rise in the percentage of agricultural funds earmarked for the TSP area. In the Seventh Plan, only 23 per cent (table 50) of the Bihar state plan's outlay for agriculture and allied activities was earmarked for investment in the TSP areas. This figure had

Table 51: Outlay under various development heads for the TSP area in the Bihar Eighth Five Year Plan, 1990–95

Development head	*Total state plan outlay (lakhs of Rs.)*	*Flow to TSP (lakhs of Rs.)*	*TSP as percentage of state plan outlay*
Agriculture and allied activities	91,136.00	32,654.00	35.82
Special programmes for rural development	129,960.00	27,350.90	21.04
Special area programmes	8,046.00	2,180.00	27.09
Irrigation and flood control	329,110.00	109,260.00	33.19
Energy	222,550.00	26,468.72	11.89
Industry and minerals	63,056.00	18,766.00	29.76
Transport	136,273.00	34,550.00	25.35
Science, technology and environment	5,140.00	1,384.00	26.92
General economic services	44,465.00	11,348.75	25.52
Social services	246,540.00	65,684.95	26.64
General services	23,724.00	7,436.00	31.34
Total	1,300,000.00	337,083.32	25.92

Source: Draft Eighth Five-Year Plan, 1990–95 (n.d.: xlvi–liii).

risen to a massive 36 per cent in the Eighth Plan. This indicates that as far as the public policy planners were concerned, they considered agriculture in the TSP regions to be reaching a crisis point, which is in consonance with the analysis in chapter 4 and later in this chapter. Hence, more and more money was being pumped into this component of development planning for the Jharkhand region.

The ever increasing allocation of money did not yield the corresponding results. The enormity of this failure of the public policy to put the money allocated to good use is reflected in the fact that only 4–10 per cent of the allocation was actually spent on development programmes in the Jharkhand region, as stated by the regional development commissioner at Ranchi in an interview in 1996. In sum, the public policy machinery had shown a lack of ability to affect the development profile of the region. The modest improvements in some development indicators during one decade were soon squandered away in the next (see next section of the chapter). A coherent and efficient development policy was lacking. Very little improvement can be noticed in the development profile of the Jharkhand region over the last half-century, and even fewer can be attributed directly to the public policy machinery.

Development Profile in 1981

By the time the 1981 census was conducted, the Tribal Sub-Plan had been under way for nearly six years. The government was already drafting the Sixth Five Year Plan of which the TSP was an important component. However, the TSP was the only component of public policy implementation that had resulted in some degree of improvement in the development profile of the Jharkhand region during the previous decade.

By 1981, the population of the Jharkhand region had increased to 17,612,069 or 25 per cent of the total population of Bihar (table 52). Once again, the administrative boundaries of the districts of Bihar had been reoriented, with the result that the percentage of land area that formed the districts of the Jharkhand region now represented only 46 per cent of the total (compared with 53 per cent in 1971 [table 32]). Due to the reorientation of

district boundaries, it is not possible to compare the relative decadal growth rate of population during the period 1971–81. However, it can be deduced that the population of the Jharkhand region grew at a fairly fast rate since a reduction of about 7 per cent in the land area of the districts of Jharkhand led to a reduction of only a little over 2 per cent in the population (tables 32 and 52).

Table 52: Land area and population in Jharkhand, 1981

	Area (sq. km)	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	79,714	17,612,069	9,080,444	8,531,625
Bihar	173,887	69,914,734	35,930,560	33,984,174
Jharkhand percentage	45.84	25.19	25.27	25.10

Source: Census of India 1981, Series 1, India Part II-B (i)—Primary Census Abstract, General Population (n.d.).

The share of Scheduled Tribes in the population of the Jharkhand region increased marginally to 30 per cent in 1981 from 29 per cent in 1971 (tables 53 and 33). However, the percentage of the ST population of Bihar which resided in the Jharkhand region fell marginally from 93 in 1971 to 92 in 1981. There seems to have been a slight increase in the ST mobility, although nearly 92 per cent of the ST still resided in the Jharkhand region. The ST male population of the Jharkhand region, as in the earlier years, was lower than the ST females, which indicates a significant level of seasonal economic migration of ST males.

As far as the development indicators of the region are concerned, very few are available for the year 1981. The government

Table 53: Scheduled Tribes population in Jharkhand, 1981

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	5,329,283	2,669,825	2,659,458
Bihar	5,801,867	2,915,492	2,895,375
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	91.85	91.57	91.85
Jharkhand percentage	30.25	29.40	31.17

Source: Census of India 1981, Series 4, Bihar (Part II-B)—Primary Census Abstract (n.d.) and *Bihar Through Figures, 1981* (1984).

of Bihar has chosen not to publish the infant mortality and birth and death rates after the mid-1970s. A similar case exists with regard to the causes of death. Consequently, it becomes increasingly difficult to analyse the state of health services in Bihar in 1981. The only figures published are those of the number of patients treated in the various government-aided medical institutions in the state in 1979 (table 54). Of the total number of patients that were treated as indoor patients in Bihar state, 23 per cent were in the Jharkhand region. Also, only 22 per cent of the total number of outdoor patients treated in Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region. Since the total population of Jharkhand was 25 per cent of the total population of Bihar (table 52), the figures for the patients treated reflect a relatively proportionate availability of health facilities in the region.[6]

Table 54: Patients treated in public medical institutions in Jharkhand, 1979*

	Number of indoor patients	*Number of outdoor patients*
Jharkhand	103,206	1,290,433
Bihar	448,098	5,861,169
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	23.03	22.01

Source: Bihar Through Figures, 1981 (1984: 164–5).
* Figures are not available for Dhanbad, Ranchi and Singhbhum.

As far as the other socio-economic indicators of development are concerned, some data is available. However, once again the picture that may emerge from a comparative examination of occupational patterns for 1971 and 1981 is not wholly accurate, as there was another redefinition of the category of workers in the later years. The 1981 census divided the population, firstly, into workers and non-workers and then went on to divide the workers into main workers and marginal workers. Thus, "a trichotomy of persons into mutually exclusive groups of 'main workers', 'marginal workers' and 'non-workers' was introduced in the 1981 Census. A uniform reference period of 'one year' preceding the enumeration was adopted for recording activity status in the 1981 Census, irrespective of whether the activity was 'seasonal'

or 'regular'". However, while formulating the economic questions for the 1981 census, it was considered desirable to "obtain ... a detailed profile of the working characteristics of the population without losing much of the comparability with 1961 and 1971 results".[7] On account of this and the fact that the figures for marginal workers in the 1981 census represent a minute percentage of the working population, the figures for 'main workers' have been utilised to examine the occupational pattern in the Jharkhand region in 1981.

As far as the relative position of employment opportunities in the Jharkhand region and Bihar state was concerned, there was a small but significant change between 1971 and 1981 (tables 34 and 55). In 1981, approximately 37 per cent of the population of the Jharkhand region was employed in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors together, compared to 29 per cent in 1971. In Bihar state, the same figure was approximately 32 per cent in 1981 compared with about 31 per cent in 1971. Hence, the opportunities of employment in the Jharkhand region as well as in Bihar as a whole increased over this period. Notably, the non-agricultural employment in the Jharkhand region had more than doubled from 7 per cent in 1971 to 16 per cent in 1981. There was a small decline in agricultural employment in the Jharkhand region but not enough to indicate a shift from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector.

Table 55: Percentage share of occupations of main workers in Jharkhand, 1981

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	23.27	21.85	30.34	44.30	39.63	55.27
Jharkhand	21.68	32.91	9.72	15.61	19.01	12.00
Bihar	23.47	38.05	8.04	8.87	12.12	5.45

Source: *Census of India 1981, Series 1, India Part II-B (i)—Primary Census Abstracts, General Population* (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators and agricultural labourers.

[2] Includes those in household industry, processing, servicing, repairs, and other workers.

As is demonstrated in tables 34 and 55, there was a slight decline in the percentage of those who worked in the agricultural sector and lived in the Jharkhand region. In 1971, 23.67 per cent of such persons in Bihar state resided in Jharkhand, whereas in 1981 only 23.27 per cent did so. However, the proportion of women agricultural workers as a percentage of such workers in Bihar as a whole increased from 26 in 1971 to 30 in 1981. There seems to have been a higher employment rate for women. By 1981, in the non-agricultural occupations, 55 per cent women workers in the whole of Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region, an increase over the 1971 figure of 44 per cent. This increase was in both male and female non-agricultural workers. In Indian conditions, this generally means poorer economic conditions. The higher rate of employment amongst women in the Jharkhand region relative to Bihar can also be attributed to sociological factors such as the absence of a tradition of purdah amongst the women of the Jharkhand region. Also pertinent is the existence of a tradition of working women in the region, which is perhaps a by-product of seasonal economic migration of the male population since the colonial period (see chapter 3).

A similar, though less significant, improvement can be noticed in the overall level of education in the Jharkhand region between 1971 and 1981 (tables 35 and 56). As far as the agriculture-related occupations were concerned, the percentage of illiterates fell from 81 in 1971 to 78 in 1981. It is a small decrease compared to the almost 8 per cent decrease in the decade of 1961–71.

The percentage of illiterate women in the Jharkhand region showed very little change from the 1961 and 1971 levels of more than 98 per cent to 97.36 per cent in 1981 (tables 21, 35 and 56). This does not indicate a very effective public policy in the region as far as overall educational standards were concerned. In fact, the marginal reduction in the percentage of illiterates in agricultural occupations was due to the rise of the percentage of persons, particularly male, who were either literate without educational level or middle-school qualified or matriculates. However, one cannot be too critical since it cannot be expected that a large percentage of the illiterate population will become graduates in a decade. Moreover, there was a small but significant level of improvement in all categories (tables 35 and 56).

Table 56: Percentage share of occupations of main workers by educational standards in Jharkhand, 1981[1]

Educational standards	*Agriculture-related activities*[7]			*Non-agricultural activities*[8]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
	Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar					
Illiterate	24.21	22.58	30.07	43.22	41.98	49.62
Literate[2]	22.27	21.98	35.20	35.89	35.94	34.10
Middle school[3]	23.22	22.74	54.35	42.22	42.26	40.57
Matriculate[4]	14.71	14.54	51.31	38.24	38.15	40.98
Intermediate[5]	11.64	11.57	28.05	37.12	36.93	40.44
Graduate and others[6]	11.37	11.26	46.57	33.44	32.69	48.51
	Jharkhand					
Illiterate	78.19	72.87	97.36	37.82	33.99	74.63
Literate[2]	6.87	8.47	1.12	8.42	9.10	1.95
Middle school[3]	12.83	15.80	2.13	21.20	22.95	4.42
Matriculate[4]	3.08	3.87	0.22	16.86	17.97	6.17
Intermediate[5]	0.33	0.41	0.01	5.60	5.82	3.46
Graduate and others[6]	0.13	0.17	0.008	6.81	7.00	5.00
	Bihar					
Illiterate	75.15	70.54	98.22	34.78	31.63	71.58
Literate[2]	7.18	8.43	0.96	9.33	9.89	2.72
Middle school[3]	12.86	15.19	1.19	19.95	21.22	5.18
Matriculate[4]	4.87	5.82	0.13	17.52	18.41	7.16
Intermediate[5]	0.66	0.79	0.01	5.99	6.16	4.07
Graduate and others[6]	0.27	0.33	0.005	8.09	8.37	4.91

Source: Census of India 1981, Series 4, Bihar Part III-A & B (i)—General Economic Tables (Tables B-I to B-VI) (n.d.).

[1] Excludes marginal workers.
[2] Without educational level.
[3] Primary or middle school.
[4] Matriculation or secondary.
[5] Includes higher secondary, intermediate, pre-university and technical/non-technical diploma not equal to degree.
[6] Includes those who hold a university degree and above.
[7] Includes cultivators, agricultural labourers, and those in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, plantations, orchards and allied activities.
[8] Includes those in mining and quarrying, manufacturing, processing, servicing, repairs, construction, trade and commerce, transport, storage, communication and other services.

As far as literacy amongst the non-agricultural occupations was concerned, the pattern of the agricultural population is repeated. The percentage of illiterates in the non-agricultural workforce of the Jharkhand region fell slightly from 44 in 1971 (table 35) to 38 in 1981. The decrease in the percentage of illiterates in non-agricultural occupations showed one major difference from the pattern among the agricultural population. There was a significant decline in the illiteracy percentage of the male as well as female components of the non-agricultural workforce. The male illiteracy figure fell from 40 per cent in 1971 to 34 per cent in 1981, while the female illiteracy percentage decreased from 84 in 1971 to 75 in 1981.

Clearly, there was a greater availability of avenues of education in the Jharkhand region in this decade. Unlike the earlier decades, the decade of 1971–81 showed a significant improvement in almost all categories of education (table 56) and not only in the literate category. It can be deduced that public policy was able to implement a small component of its proclaimed goals. It should be noted that the implementation of this policy was more efficient in the urban areas than the rural, since there was a greater improvement in the educational levels of the non-agricultural workforce, especially in women's educational levels.

The patterns for the whole of Bihar follow this broad trend (table 35 and 56) with the difference that the population of Bihar as a whole was better educated than that of the Jharkhand region in 1981. The percentage of illiterates in Bihar was lower in all categories of workers, except women in agricultural occupations, compared to Jharkhand. There are slight variations across categories but overall, the educational scenario was better in Bihar than the Jharkhand region.

Hence, although the education policy showed signs of increased vigour in this period in both the Jharkhand region and Bihar state, the education policy performed better in Bihar than the Jharkhand region. As far as Jharkhand was concerned, policy implementation with regard to improvement of educational levels was better in the case of the Scheduled Tribes (discussed later in the chapter) and those in non-agricultural occupations. This would mean that the vast majority of the population of the Jharkhand region that resided in the rural areas and that was not

tribal was only marginally affected by the newly found vitality of public policy implementation in Jharkhand.

Among the indicators of agricultural produce, again, the figures for agricultural production are not available for the period under analysis. The government of Bihar has only published the area under various crops and provides no details of agricultural production. However, rough estimates can be made of whether the government policy of maximising the available acreage under various crops was working. It can be noted from tables 36 and 57 that it was not the case. In 1974–75, 32 per cent of the total land area under paddy in Bihar was in the Jharkhand region (i.e., 1,687 thousand hectares). This decreased to 30 per cent in 1985–86 (i.e., 1,591 thousand hectares). Similarly, 5 per cent of the total area under wheat in Bihar state lay in the Jharkhand region (74 thousand hectares) in 1974–75; this declined to only 4 per cent (73 thousand hectares) in 1985–86, as did the proportion of land under gram and maize, which fell from 21 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively, in 1974–75 to 17 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively, in 1985–86. However, the proportion of land under barley showed an increase from 13 per cent in 1974–75 to 18 in 1985–86. This increase in the percentage share of the Jharkhand region in the total land under barley was due to the decrease in the total cropped area under barley in Bihar as a whole. In absolute terms, the land area under barley in Jharkhand fell from 25 thousand hectares in 1974–75 to 15 thousand hectares in 1985–86. A similar pattern obtains for Bihar state as well (tables 36 and 57).

Table 57: Area under principal crops in Jharkhand, 1985–86
(in thousands of hectares)

	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Gram*	*Barley*	*Maize*
Jharkhand	1,591	73	32	15	137
Bihar	5,335	1,835	191	83	669
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	29.82	3.97	16.75	18.07	20.47

Source: Bihar Through Figures, 1991 (n.d.: 90–3).

The probable fall in agricultural production is also indicated by a pattern of shift from agricultural occupations to non-agricultural occupations in this period. In such a scenario, the probability of a rise in agricultural production was extremely remote. The data about agricultural finances, land transfers and moneylenders in this period has also not been published.

As far as the performance of public policy to secure irrigation facilities and thereby increase agricultural production was concerned, the Jharkhand region seems to have been of marginal importance in the period 1973–74 to 1980–81 (tables 38 and 58). There was a modest increase of about 10 thousand hectares in the total irrigated area in the Jharkhand region, which increased from 176 thousand hectares in 1973–74 to 186 thousand hectares in 1980–81. Significantly, over the same period, the total area irrigated in Bihar as a whole increased by more than 600 thousand hectares. Clearly, there was little effort at securing larger irrigation potential in the Jharkhand region compared to Bihar. Moreover, Jharkhand with an area of more than 45 per cent of the total area of Bihar (table 52) accounted for only 5 per cent of the total area irrigated by government canals in Bihar state in 1981 (compared to 4 per cent in 1973–74).[8]

In fact, there was some growth in the total area irrigated by government canals over the last decades. However, the growth rate was too slow to be of much consequence as far as agricultural output was concerned. This is especially so in light of the fact that other sources of irrigation had significantly diminished. The proportion of land irrigated by wells showed a small rise in Jharkhand between 1973–74 and 1980–81, but the small extent of the area so irrigated makes this rise insignificant. Moreover, the total area irrigated by wells was larger than that irrigated by government canals in Jharkhand, in 1980–81. Overall there was a very small increase, but the total area irrigated in the Jharkhand region was still lower than the 1961 levels (tables 26 and 58). The agricultural output in Jharkhand, consequently, would have fallen due to the poor irrigation potential.

The shift in the occupational pattern between 1971 and 1981 also was probably the consequence of this declining ability of agriculture to support existing levels of employment. The overall growth of job opportunities was, in fact, the contribution of the non-agricultural sector. Further, this growth in the non-agricultural sector was likely to have been born out of private initiative rather than out of significant policy impetus. Therefore, the policy

Table 58: Area irrigated from different sources, 1980–81 (in thousands of hectares)

	Government canals	*Private canals*	*Tanks*	*Wells/tube wells*	*Other sources*	*Total area irrigated*
Jharkhand	56	_#	22	62	47	186
Bihar	1,094	96	96	994	767	2,953
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	5.11	–	22.91	6.23	6.12	6.29
Jharkhand percentage	30.10	–	11.82	33.33	25.26	–
Bihar percentage	37.04	3.25	3.25	33.66	25.97	–

Source: Bihar Through Figures, 1981 (1984: 110–1).
Nil or less than 500 hectares in each district.

mechanism was able to deliver only limited results. Overall, there was no significant change in the level of effectiveness in public policy implementation in the Jharkhand region—a pattern that holds true for the decade 1981–91 as well.

Development Profile in 1991

The political dynamics of the Jharkhand region in the period 1981–91 was marked by economic blockade of mineral transportation under the leadership of the AJSU, demonstration and agitation led by the JCC, and other politically effervescent activities. This ensured that the issue of Jharkhand came on to the national agenda, and the national press vigorously pursued the poor state of affairs in the Jharkhand region. However, the hectic political activity resulted neither in an accelerated pace of development in the region nor in any new reorientation of public policy initiatives. The development profile of the Jharkhand region, therefore, was not much better in 1991. The issue of an autonomous state, therefore, started finding greater popular support resulting in the creation of the JAAC in 1995.

As far as the demographic profile of the region was concerned, the demographic balance between Bihar state and the Jharkhand region remained unaltered (tables 52 and 59). The Jharkhand region continued to represent about 46 per cent of the land area and made up 25 per cent of the total population of Bihar. Only a very small rise in the proportion of population that resided in the Jharkhand region can be discerned. The decadal growth rate of the population of the Jharkhand region during 1981–91 was 24 per cent whereas the same for the population of Bihar as a whole

Table 59: Land area and population in Jharkhand, 1991

	Area (sq. km)	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	79,732	21,848,860	11,354,210	10,494,650
Bihar	173,877	86,338,853	45,147,280	41,191,573
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	45.85	25.30	25.14	25.47

Source: Census of India 1991, Series 1, Paper 2 of 1991—Provisional Population Tables: Rural-Urban Distributions (1991).

was slightly lower at 23 per cent (both rates of growth derived from tables 52 and 59).

More importantly, the ST component of the population of the Jharkhand region declined substantially. From 30 per cent in 1981 (table 53), the share of STs in Jharkhand fell to 28 per cent in 1991. As opposed to 24 per cent decadal growth rate of the total population of the Jharkhand region, the ST population grew at the rate of only 13 per cent over the decade of 1981–91 (derived from tables 53 and 60). This substantially altered the balance between the tribal and non-tribal population in the Jharkhand region. The concentration of ST population within Jharkhand continued, with 91.34 per cent of the ST population of Bihar as a whole residing in the region (compared to 91.85 per cent in 1981).

Table 60: Scheduled Tribes population in Jharkhand, 1991

	Total	*Males*	*Females*
Jharkhand	6,044,010	3,059,715	2,984,295
Bihar	6,616,914	3,357,563	3,259,351
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	91.34	91.12	91.56
Jharkhand percentage	27.66	26.94	28.43

Source: Census of India 1991, Series 1, Vol. I, India Part II-B (i),—Primary Census Abstract, General Population (n.d.).

As far as the occupational patterns of the Jharkhand region and Bihar state were concerned, the share of Jharkhand in the total agricultural workers of Bihar remained more or less static (table 61). In 1991, 23.47 per cent of the total agricultural workers of Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region (compared to 23.27 per cent in 1981 [table 55]), which was the equitable percentage since about 25 per cent of the total population of Bihar resided in this region. The percentage of women agricultural workers in Jharkhand increased slightly from 30 in 1981 to 31 in 1991.

As far as the Jharkhand region itself was concerned, in 1991 about 31 per cent of the population was employed in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors compared to over 37 per cent in 1981 (tables 55 and 61). There was, therefore, a lower availability of jobs in 1991 in the Jharkhand region, as was the case in Bihar as a whole. From 32 per cent in 1981, the level of employ-

Table 61: Percentage share of occupations in Jharkhand, 1991

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	23.47	21.68	31.32	40.10	39.79	43.23
Jharkhand percentage	22.22	32.12	11.50	9.12	15.83	1.87
Bihar percentage	23.95	37.26	9.36	5.75	10.00	1.10

Source: Census of India 1991, Series 1, Paper 3 of 1991—Provisional Population Totals: Workers and their Distribution (1991).

[1] Includes cultivators and agricultural labourers.

[2] Includes all other workers including marginal workers.

ment fell to 29 per cent of the population by 1991, in the whole of Bihar. There seems to have been an all-round loss of job opportunities in Bihar as a whole as well as the Jharkhand region. Non-agricultural employment in the Jharkhand region declined from 16 per cent in 1981 to 9 per cent in 1991. A small increase in agricultural employment between 1981 and 1991 indicates that some people, those few who could, shifted back to agricultural occupations to earn a living. This would have shifted the load back to an already overburdened agricultural sector. There is also a pattern of increasing industrialisation in Bihar as a whole. In 1981, 44 per cent of non-agricultural workers of Bihar as a whole lived in the Jharkhand region. By 1991, only 40 per cent of them lived in this region. The Jharkhand region was also losing its industrial edge over Bihar as a whole that had made it important to the policy planners at Patna. After a small but significant improvement in the employment scenario in 1971–81, the availability of jobs began declining again in 1981–91.

The literacy rate of the Jharkhand region showed a slightly better rate of growth than Bihar state in the decade 1981–91.[9] In 1981, the literacy rates for Jharkhand and Bihar as a whole were 28 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively (*Bihar Through Figures, 1981* 1984: 48–49). By 1991, the literacy rate of the Jharkhand region had increased to 34 whereas that of whole of Bihar was 31 per cent. Female literacy in Jharkhand increased from 15 to 21

per cent, while in Bihar state, it rose from 14 to 19 per cent (table 62). Public policy implementation in the area of education and literacy did show results in a more efficient fashion in the Jharkhand region than in Bihar state.

Moving on to the question of agriculture, we are again constrained to analyse the area under principal crops rather than the actual production.[10] Tables 57 and 63 attest to the fact that the total area under principal crops in Bihar state increased marginally from 8,113 thousand hectares in 1985–86 to 8,319 thousand hectares in 1988–89, whereas in the Jharkhand region it declined from 1,848 thousand hectares in 1985–86 to 1,712 thousand hectares in 1988–89. Thus, despite agriculture being a target area under the TSP since the Sixth Plan, the total cropped area in Jharkhand had declined. Hence, it is unlikely that there would have been a rise in agricultural output, especially in view of the falling irrigation potential.

The Seventh Five Year Plan sought to make a large investment and effort in increasing the irrigation potential of the Jharkhand region. However, in the absence of published data, only the performance of government canals as a source of irrigation can be examined. In 1980–81, 5 per cent of the area irrigated by government canals in Bihar lay in the Jharkhand region (table 58). By 1988–89, this too had fallen to only 3 per cent (table 64). Further, from 56 thousand hectares of land irrigated in the Jharkhand region by government canals in 1980–81, the area of land so irrigated in 1988–89 had fallen to 39 thousand hectares. Despite the public policy effort at creating additional irrigation potential through construction of minor and major power and irrigation projects, as reflected in the plan allocation for the Seventh Plan, the irrigated area in the Jharkhand region actually declined. However, the area irrigated by government canals in Bihar as a whole increased from 1,094 thousand hectares in 1980–81 to 1,262 thousand hectares in 1988–89. Hence, it might be said that the public policy efforts to create additional irrigation potential in Jharkhand had failed, whereas it showed some signs of relative success in Bihar as whole.

It may be concluded that policy efforts in the Jharkhand region did not show many results in the decade 1981–91. Evidently, the public-policy delivery machinery had not been able to make itself

Table 62: Literacy in Jharkhand, 1991

	Literacy			*Percentage of literacy*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand	7,352,184	5,168,378	2,183,806	33.65	45.51	20.80
Bihar	26,854,389	19,176,364	7,678,025	31.10	42.47	18.63
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	27.37	26.95	28.44	–	–	–

Source: Census of India 1991, Series 5, Paper 1 of 1991—Provisional Population Totals (n.d.).

Table 63: Area under principal crops in Jharkhand, 1988–89 (in thousands of hectares)

	Rice	*Wheat*	*Gram*	*Barley*	*Maize*
Jharkhand	1,518	53	12	106	23
Bihar	5,308	2,112	58	693	148
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	28.59	2.50	20.68	15.29	15.54

Source: Bihar Through Figures, 1991 (n.d.: 90–3.).

Table 64: Area irrigated from different sources in Jharkhand, 1988–89 (in thousands of hectares)

	Government canals	*Private canals*	*Total*
Jharkhand	39	NA	39
Bihar	1,262	NA	1,262
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	3.09	–	3.09

Source: Bihar Through Figures, 1991 (n.d.: 149–51).

effective in its thrust areas, such as agriculture and irrigation. Relative success in areas such as education was achieved, but public policy had already been successful in these areas in the earlier plans. There was actually a decline in some sectors, such as employment and irrigation potential, over the previous decade. The efforts to reorient the policy delivery mechanism to arrive at greater efficiency and effectiveness was not successful in the Jharkhand region in the decade 1981–91.

Development Profile of Scheduled Tribes, 1971–1991

It has been noticed that the Scheduled Tribes population of the Jharkhand region had declined during the decades 1981–91 after a modest increase during 1971–81. However, the development profile of the ST in Jharkhand improved as a result of the concentrated efforts undertaken since the late 1970s, under the TSP.

In the ST occupational levels there were some notable improvements. The TSP had sought to concentrate on the tribal population in predetermined pockets in the region of Jharkhand and

this strategy had yielded some results. Table 65 shows that in 1981, most of the ST workers in Bihar state (91 per cent of the agricultural ST workers and 94 per cent of the non-agricultural ST workforce) continued to work in the region of Jharkhand. In 1981, roughly 46 per cent of the ST population of the region was employed which is much better than the general level of employment in the region (table 55). It is also a significant improvement over the 1971 figure of about 35 per cent (table 46). Clearly, at least, the TSP component of public policy had benefited the tribal population as far as availability of employment was concerned.

Table 65: Percentage share of occupations of Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand, 1981

	Agricultural and related activities[1]			*Non-agricultural activities*[2]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand as percentage of Bihar	91.07	91.17	90.78	9[illegible].28	90.67	96.64
Jharkhand percentage	32.20	47.31	17.02	13.88	9.43	18.34

Source: Census of India 1981, Series 4, Bihar Part IX (iii)—Special Tables for Scheduled Tribes (Tables ST-1 to ST-3) (n.d.).

[1] Includes cultivators, agricultural labourers and those in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantation, orchards and allied activities.

[2] Includes those in mining and quarrying, manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs, construction, trade and commerce, transport, storage and communications and other services, and marginal workers.

There was a shift in the concentration of tribal males from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations in the Jharkhand region. That would have significantly reduced the pressure on the declining agricultural production.[11] In 1971, 51 per cent of tribal males in Jharkhand were in agricultural occupations (table 46), whereas only 47 per cent worked in agriculture-related jobs in 1981. The decline in the percentage of ST males in the agricultural sector did not mean a loss of job opportunities because of the fact that, firstly, there was also a rise in ST males employed in the non-agricultural sector from 5 per cent in 1971 to 9 per cent in 1981. Secondly, there was a marginal increase in the total per-

centage of ST males who were employed, from about 56 per cent in 1971 to about 57 per cent in 1981 (tables 46 and 65).

The same tables also show that there was a significant increase in the percentage of ST women who were employed, from approximately 13 per cent in 1971 to more than 35 per cent in 1981. The concerted effort to generate employment amongst the ST population under the MADA/TSP had delivered results. The level of employment amongst the STs in the Jharkhand region outstripped the overall employment level in the Jharkhand region.

The improvement in the employment levels of the ST population in the Jharkhand region was also accompanied by an improvement in the literacy and educational levels of the STs in the region[12] (tables 47 and 66). The overall illiteracy of the ST population fell from 88 per cent in 1971 to 79 per cent in 1981. This was a major drop and is also significant in the light of the fact that the overall percentage of those educated up to matriculation or above increased from 0.71 per cent in 1971 to 3.67 per cent in 1981. The percentage of literates without any educational qualifications also increased from 5.74 in 1971 to 6.26 in 1981, as did the percentage of STs educated up to middle school: from 6 in 1971 to 8 in 1981. The educational level of ST women was still very poor with nearly 92 per cent illiterate. At the other end of the spectrum, the share of ST women who were matriculate or above increased from 0.26 per cent in 1971 to nearly 3 per cent in 1981. An improvement across all the categories can be noticed, in the decade 1971–81.

The development policy reoriented to target the Scheduled Tribe population under TSP/MADA had shown signs of success during 1981–91. However, on account of the fact that just over a quarter of the total population in the Jharkhand region was of tribal origin, the public policy efforts were benefiting only a minority of the population. Consequently, this approach may have been successful in ameliorating some of the problems faced by the Scheduled Tribe population of the Jharkhand region, but the patterns of underdevelopment amongst the non-tribal population in the region were becoming more acute. The modest advances made in one decade were quickly reversed in the next. This intermittent public policy implementation, no doubt, marginally

Table 66: Scheduled Tribes educational levels in Jharkhand, 1981

	Illiterate			*Literate*[1]			*Middle school*[2]			*Matriculate and above*[3]		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Jharkhand	4,193,368	1,952,457	2,443,366	334,073	249,786	84,287	442,627	345,416	97,211	195,895	121,990	73,905
Bihar	4,823,470	2,152,519	2,670,951	356,388	268,018	88,370	474,773	370,323	104,450	162,242	129,640	32,602
Jharkhand percentage	78.68	73.13	91.87	6.26	9.35	3.16	8.30	12.93	3.65	3.67	4.56	2.77

Source: Census of India 1981, Series-4, Bihar Part IX (iv)—Special Tables for Scheduled Tribes (Tables ST-4 to ST-7) (n.d.).

[1] Without educational level, including figures for educational level not classified.

[2] Primary, middle or junior basic.

[3] Higher secondary, intermediate/pre-university or technical/non-technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree, and those who hold a university degree, postgraduate degree, technical degree, agriculture and dairying, veterinary, engineering and technology, medicine or an equivalent qualification.

improved some of the development indicators and did yield some degree of betterment in the overall developmental profile of the Jharkhand region. However, the rate of improvement in the development profile of Jharkhand was fast outstripped by a faster improvement in the development profile of Bihar as a whole. Hence, the popular perception in the Jharkhand region of Bihar (now Jharkhand state) that there was a north-Bihar-versus-south-Bihar divide as far as development profile was concerned, was not ill-founded.

The public policy machinery failed to benefit a significant majority of the population of the Jharkhand region. The remarkable insistence of the policy planners on investing an ever-increasing amount of money without examining the inefficiencies in the policy delivery mechanism contributed to the lack of success in the implementation of balanced plans.

This lack of growth in the development profile of Jharkhand, both as a region and in relation to the average for the whole of Bihar, fundamentally altered the dynamics of the political process in Jharkhand. The correlation between the political process in the region and the declining development profile has been analysed in the next chapter.

Notes

1. The plan allocation and expenditure figures are in lakhs of rupees. One lakh equals 100,000.
2. *Report of the Study Team on Tribal Development* (chairman Shilo Ao), quoted in the *Report, Development of Tribal Areas* (1981: 1.5).
3. Social and community services included the subheads of general education, art and culture, technical education, medical, water supply, housing, police housing, urban development, information and publicity, labour and labour welfare, welfare of ST, SC and Other Backward Classes, social welfare and nutrition.
4. All figures quoted for the Sixth Plan have been taken from *Draft Sixth Five-Year Plan, 1980–85* (n.d.: lxvi–lxix).
5. The subheads under agriculture and allied activities were research and education, crop husbandry, land reform, minor irrigation, soil and water conservation, animal husbandry, dairy development, fisheries, forest, investment in agricultural financial institutions, marketing, storage and warehousing, special programmes for rural development [Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Drought Prone

Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)], community development and panchayats.

6. Since the figures for Dhanbad, Ranchi and Singhbhum are not available, this reflection on the health services vis-à-vis Bihar as a whole must be treated with caution. However, the comparison, largely, holds true for the rest of the Jharkhand region since these figures are not included in the total for Bihar state as well.
7. *Census of India 1991, Series -1, Paper 3 of 1991—Provisional Population Totals: Workers and their Distribution* 1991: 2.6.
8. It must be noted that in 1961–62, the Jharkhand region had a potential to irrigate 230,675 hectares, i.e., 12 per cent of the total irrigation capacity in Bihar as whole.
9. The cross-tabulation between workers and educational levels for 1991 was not available when the study was completed. Consequently, the literacy figures for the entire population in 1991 have been compared with similar figures for 1981. (Source: *Census of India 1991, Series 5, Paper 1 of 1991—Provisional Population Totals* n.d.) The literacy figures for 1981 have been taken from *Bihar Through Figures, 1981* 1984: 48–9.
10. Bihar government has not published the area under principal crops at the district level in the statistics published after 1989.
11. Another interpretation of this pattern can be that the falling agricultural employment potential in the Jharkhand region compelled the ST population to look for non-agricultural employment. In that event, it is more than likely that the non-agricultural employment which they would have found would be ill-paid unskilled jobs or highly dangerous jobs such as deep or opencast mining. Therefore, these patterns must be treated with caution.
12. The rising literacy and education levels amongst the ST in the Jharkhand region would have probably led to better opportunities of employment in the non-agricultural sector.

6

Politics of Development, Identity and Autonomy

हमारा (*sic*) पास अगर परिषद या अलग राज्य होगा तो . . . पाँच साल के अन्दर यह इलाका . . . सबसे अव्वल नम्बर प्रदेश में आयेगा। हमारा (*sic*) पास जो खनिज सम्पदा है, हमारा (*sic*) पास जो मजदूर है, . . . अगर सदउपाय होता तो आज हम सबसे एक नम्बर के इलाका होते और यह हमारा राज्य देंगे न तो हम पाँच साल में विकास कर देंगे।[1]

[if we have a council or a separate state, this area will be counted as first amongst the number one regions. The mineral wealth that we have, the labourers that we have . . . if they had been utilised properly, this area would have been number one and if we are given our separate state we will develop the region within five years.]

विकास की दर से हमारा छोटा नागपुर बहुत पिछड़ा हुआ है। इसीलिए झारखण्ड मूवमेन्ट लोग निकाले हुए है।[2]

[In terms of the rate of development, our Chota Nagpur is very backward. That is why the people have come up with Jharkhand movement.]

The above quotes from interviews held with some of the politically aware individuals in the Jharkhand region in 1996 indicate that in popular perception, issues of autonomy and the development profile of the region are intertwined. Popular perception has come to accept that a better rate of development activity in the region is possible only if there is adequate devolution of powers.

It has been noticed in chapters 4 and 5 that there was almost a continuous decline in the major indicators of development of the Jharkhand region. There was a positive correlation between this decline in development indicators and the electoral support for the Jharkhandi parties, but the situation was in fact much more

complex. The Modified Resource Dependence Model enables us to understand this correlation in a coherent manner.

The leadership of the Jharkhand movement definitely saw a correlation between the progress of development programmes and political and administrative autonomy. What the Jharkhandi political groups lacked was a concrete agenda for the development policies and programmes in the region. This is clear from their literature, which had no clear outline to be followed for a more speedy development of the region. This lack of vision also emerged in the interviews conducted during fieldwork in 1996. When asked if they had a plan or framework for development activities if and when a state of Jharkhand is created, Shailendra Bhattacharya, member of the central committee of the JMM (S), responded that the government must first hand over the administration to them. The Jharkhandi political groups would then decide what to do. When pressed further, he responded: "यहा से उप्लब्ध जो साधन है, उनको, उन साधनो को हम इस्तेमाल करेंगे, उनके जनता के विकास के लिए। . . . इसी माध्यम से विकास के काम करेंगे।"[3] [We will utilise the resources available here for their (people's) development. . . . we will work for development through this medium.]

In the light of Jharkhandi leadership's emphasis on the poor development profile of the Jharkhand region, the relationship between poor policy performance and electoral support for the political groups which demanded autonomy must be analysed. This chapter, therefore, maps out the patterns which indicate that the failure of the State's policy delivery mechanism in the region has contributed to the crystallisation of the Jharkhandi identity. The conclusions reached will have relevance in terms of policy, since there was an actual failure of the delivery mechanism (chapters 4 and 5) which encouraged the resurgence and crystallisation of the nascent Jharkhandi identity.

Politics of Development

In democratic developing countries such as India, the policies and programmes for the development of a region/social group must address two related issues. First, they must endeavour to

raise the standard of living of the population of the target region/social group. Second, there needs to be an effort to generate a popular perception of betterment of living standards. Any achievements on the front of development policy implementation will not serve the purpose of containing socio-political conflict and neither enhance legitimacy for the regime unless society views it as such. This leads us to a crucial issue in the relationship between the articulation of ethnic identity and public policy implementation in India, particularly in Jharkhand.

It would be difficult to defend a contention that there has been no noticeable improvement over the last half-century in the overall standard of living of the population, resulting from the development policy of the Indian state. Respondents interviewed in the Jharkhand region[4] (during fieldwork in 1996) agreed that over the past few decades, there had been a marked improvement in the standard of living of most persons in Jharkhand. They also recognised the central role played by the government's development policy. Notwithstanding, they also expressed their stark disappointment with the slow pace and inefficiency of the State's development efforts. Evidently, the perception of betterment among them was marginal. The successes of the development policy to some extent has generated a certain degree of legitimacy for the regime. However, this process has gradually been undermined over the last two decades. Thus, an effort to understand the reasons for this failure of the government—to harness the legitimising effect of the improvement in general living conditions of the population—is required. This leads us to another malaise in the model of development adopted in India.

"All plans of development have greater chances of success if the relevant cultural and social factors are integrated into planning. . . . social and cultural factors must be so presented that they are plainly appropriate to the problem at hand and are clearly useful to the makers of development decisions" (Narayan 1988: 81). The model of development adopted in India after Independence had no place for socio-cultural factors because it did not have avenues for the involvement of local communities. The development model premised on centralised rational bureaucratic planning and implementation of industry-led development was hardly suited to the development requirements of the tribal

and more backward regions. The absence of meaningful contributions by the local communities in the policy process, in terms of addressing the local needs and utilising locally available resources, led to plans being drawn that were unsuitable for a sustained development effort. Also pertinent in such a model of development are the high 'transaction costs' of the development effort. Since locally available resources were hardly utilised in the planning and implementation of development programmes, it was too expensive to sustain a long-drawn, coherent and vigorous development effort of the State, not to mention the possibilities of corruption that it engendered (Narayan 1988: 81).

The overall consequence of this model of development was that the local communities became passive beneficiaries of the State's development policy instead of being active partners. There were very few efforts, if any, to involve the local communities in the generation and maintenance of development programmes and projects. Consequently, there was no perception of improvement on the part of the local communities, and whenever matters worsened, the local population simply looked up to the State for more handouts instead of making joint efforts with the development policy machinery to ensure better availability and management of resources.

Consequently, there emerged a politics of development. The political resources at the command of the local communities were channelled to secure an increasing amount of development funds as relief or short-term programmes and not as investment into sustainable development activities.

An exchange of resources between the local communities or identities and the State to generate a long-term development plan as well as legitimacy for the regime, which could have occurred at an early stage, was delayed. An absence of due credence to the socio-cultural factors and participative local-development structures in the State's policy mechanism meant that locally sustainable plans were relatively unknown. Consequently, the local communities gradually began to resort to agitational politics in order to generate some meaningful exchange of resources with the State.

The Jharkhand movement therefore emerged as one of the avenues for this exchange of resources between the electorate of the region and the State. Since the Jharkhandi groups did not, for

many reasons, command enough political influence in the executive and legislative structures of the State (chapter 3), they demanded political and administrative autonomy in order to achieve better development policy implementation in the region. Due to the inability of the rationalist State to respond successfully to this movement based on tribal heritage, the demand for autonomy found greater support.

The Jharkhandi leaders, however, were not ready to divorce themselves from the issue of tribal identity. They had successfully managed to merge the issues of Jharkhandi identity with the poor performance of the development bureaucracy. They had successfully identified the problem of poor local participation in the development effort and, therefore, sought autonomy in order to implement policies that had greater local relevance. The issue of Jharkhandi identity, which was more inclusive than exclusive in nature, was invoked to generate political support. Despite being premised on tribal heritage and culture, the leadership was quick to include the non-tribal population of the Jharkhand region in the category of Jharkhandi because of the overall numerical minority of people of tribal origins:

> झारखण्ड के विरोधी यह प्रचार करते हैं कि झारखण्ड प्रान्त बनने से बाहरी लोगों को भगा दिया जायेगा। यह प्रचार झारखण्ड की जनता की एकता को तोड़ने के लिए और झारखण्ड आन्दोलन में तोड़-फोड़ करने के उद्देश्य से किया गया है। . . . सैकड़ों जातियों के लोग झारखण्ड प्रदेश के मूल निवासी हैं लेकिन झारखण्ड सिर्फ इन्हीं लोगों का नहीं है। वे सभी लोग जो वर्षों से झारखण्ड में रह रहे हैं, . . . झारखण्ड उन सबों का भी उतना ही है जितना यहां के मूल निवासियों का है। (Soren 1992: 20–1)
>
> [The opponents of the Jharkhand propagate that after the creation of the Jharkhand state, the outsiders will be expelled. This propaganda is aimed at breaking the unity of the people of Jharkhand and at disrupting the Jharkhand movement. . . . People of hundreds of *jatis*[5] are original residents of the Jharkhand region but Jharkhand does not belong to them only. All those people who are living here for years . . . have the same claim to the region as the original residents.]

Thus, the leaders of the Jharkhand movement were using a mix of tribal identity, populism, and issues about the poor development profile of the region to seek electoral support. Whether

the people of the region saw any relation between the poor development profile of the region and the demand for regional autonomy is also important to understand the salience of the Jharkhandi identity in the politics of the region.

People in the Jharkhand region have asserted that the state government at Patna did not care to invest enough in the region and hence they want an independent state for faster economic development.[6] Clearly, the identity of being a Jharkhandi was bolstered by this attitude since it defined yet another aspect of the "we" and "them" division.

Dominance of Jharkhandi Parties

By the time India gained independence in 1947, the Jharkhandi leaders had succeeded in the creation of a community in south Bihar. As discussed in chapter 2, the autonomous form of community formation which had taken place at the national level was replicated at the level of the Jharkhandi community. Tribal heritage and culture was seen as the foundation stone for this politically self-conscious community/identity. By the time of Independence, the Jharkhandis, or at least their leaders, were convinced of the existence of a Jharkhandi community (seen as akin to the Indian community created by the nationalist leadership), though at a lower subnational level. This conviction had become so strong by the late 1940s that the Jharkhandi leaders had also started to grapple with the rules of inclusion of non-tribal societal and political groups within this identity (as all identities premised on communal lines must do at some point or the other). The redefinition of the character of the Adivasi Mahasabha (see chapter 3) and throwing open the membership of the Jharkhand Party to the non-tribal population of the region provides proof that such a process had started as early as the late 1940s and early 1950s. This indicates that the leaders were convinced that the post-colonial Indian state would grant political recognition to the Jharkhandi identity and were eager to include non-tribal elements in their political strategies. Further, given that only about 36 per cent of the population of the region was of tribal descent by 1951 (table 2), such an inclusive policy indicates an astute political understanding of the operation of the new political system adopted in 1950.

Jharkhandi leaders such as Jaipal Singh had started to demand political recognition in a nascent form in the Constituent Assembly and later in various other public forums. The Jharkhandi leaders had hoped to engage in an exchange of resources with the independent Indian state in a manner similar to the nationalists. They hoped that the threat to the regime from political agitation would engage the State in a meaningful exchange of political, economic and information resources. However, the nationalistic, socialistic credentials of the Indian state gave it a degree of political legitimacy and support which the JHP was not able to undermine. The promises set out in the new Constitution were, at least in the short term, enough to tilt the political balance in favour of the INC regime and the State. Also, the overwhelming control of the State over the economic and information resources meant that any exchange which might have taken place would have been skewed in favour of the State. The Jharkhandi community was clearly the recipient of the largesse which the State chose to allocate to them. On account of their weak political position, the Jharkhandi leaders were unable to effectively lobby for a better resource allocation and development investment in the Jharkhand region. Consequently, they were unable to generate avenues for a meaningful exchange of resources between the State and the population of the region. Hence, the Jharkhandi population was constrained to depend on the plans that the State drew up for them instead of having a meaningful role in the development planning for the region.

Another feature of the politico-economic situation in Jharkhand in the early 1950s was the relatively better development profile of the Jharkhand region vis-à-vis Bihar as a whole. As has emerged in the discussion in chapter 4, the development profile of the Jharkhand region in 1951 was quite poor, but so were the profiles of most parts of India. However, the development profile of Jharkhand was better than that of Bihar as a whole.

The death, birth and infant mortality rates of the Jharkhand region were better than that of Bihar as a whole. The number of patients treated in government and aided hospitals and the expenditure on such hospitals was in proportion to the population that resided in the region. Jharkhand produced more than 42 per cent of the paddy and more than 20 per cent of the maize and

arhar produced in the whole of Bihar (table 4). A significant proportion of loans disbursed for wasteland reclamation was spent in the Jharkhand region. In consonance with the mineral wealth of the region, more people lived within urban areas in Jharkhand compared to Bihar as a whole. There was roughly 40 per cent employment in the Jharkhand region compared with 35 per cent in Bihar as a whole (table 14A). It had more than 47 per cent literacy compared to about 29 per cent in Bihar as a whole (table 15).

However, all was not well in 1951 on the revenue front. In the Jharkhand region, the proportion of sales tax as well as tax on electricity collected was quite high (tables 11 and 12). On the other hand, agricultural tax collection was dismal (table 10).[7] The agricultural loans available to farmers in Jharkhand represented only 16 per cent of the total amounts disbursed in the whole of Bihar (table 5). However, overall, as has been discussed in chapter 4, the development indicators in Jharkhand were slightly better than Bihar as a whole, but left a lot to be desired.

First general election

The first general election was held in 1952. The issue of the Jharkhand region had acquired some degree of mass appeal. Jaipal Singh and his JHP had begun to highlight the question of an autonomous territory for the Jharkhandis. The issue of a separate state of Jharkhand had mass support, which was confirmed by the results of the Lok Sabha election.

In the first general election, the Jharkhandi parties managed to win three of the eight Lok Sabha seats in the Jharkhand region[8] (tables 67 and 68). What made their victories significant was the percentage of votes polled in these constituencies. The JHP won the Chaibasa seat with 77 per cent of the votes polled. In the Ranchi West constituency, Jaipal Singh managed 61 per cent of the votes, whereas a candidate of the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana Janata Party (CSPJ) with 57 per cent of the votes won the Hazaribagh West seat. In these seats, the Jharkhandi parties polled an average of 65 per cent of the votes cast.

Moreover, the Jharkhandi parties had a significant political presence in four other constituencies. In the constituencies where such parties had an electoral presence among the first five candi-

Table 67: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1952 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chaibasa	3	JHP 76.7 Kanu Ram Deogam	IND 13.9 Purno C. Birua	IND 9.4	–	–
Hazaribagh East	3	CPI 50.3 Nageshwar P. Sinha	CSPJ 37.7 Tara K. Prasad	SP 12.0	–	–
Hazaribagh West	3	CSPJ 57.1 Ram N. Singh	INC 35.5 Jhansi Ram	SP 7.5	–	–
Palamu-cum-Hazaribagh-cum-Ranchi	8	INC 20.7 Jithan Kharwar	INC 18.4 Gajendra P. Singh	JHP 15.9	JHP 15.0	CSPJ 11.2
Purnea-cum- Santhal Pargana	6	INC 25.2 Bhagwat Jha Azad	JHP 22.4 Jughar S. Paul	INC 22.4	JHP 18.4	SP 8.1
Ranchi Northeast	7	INC 32.6 Abdul Ibrahim	SP 24.1 Ajit N. Banerjee	CSPJ 18.0	FBM 11.6	IND 5.4
Ranchi West	3	JHP 60.9 Jaipal Singh	INC 32.0 J.S. Manki	CSPJ 7.2	–	–
Santhal Parganas cum Hazaribagh	6	INC 25.0 Ram Raj Jajware	INC 22.9 Lal Hembrom	IND 21.1	IND 13.9	IND 8.7

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.

Table 68: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1952 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1952	48.6	42.56	64.9	3 out of 8*

* See note 8 at the end of this chapter.

dates, an average of 49 per cent of votes was cast for them (tables 67 and 68). It is noteworthy that in some constituencies, such as Palamu-cum-Hazaribagh-cum-Ranchi, the total votes polled by the Jharkhandi parties surpassed the votes polled by the victorious INC candidate. However, the lack of unity within the JHP and between the JHP and other Jharkhandi political groups precluded their victory in such seats. Overall, the Jharkhandi parties polled 43 per cent of the total valid votes cast in the Jharkhand region.

The Jharkhandi political formations polled a high percentage of votes in the three constituencies in which they won, but faced mixed fortunes in the others. This indicates that most of their support was restricted to tribal pockets. Jaipal Singh and JHP had been emphasising the tribal characteristics of the region in the run-up to the elections. He and other tribal leaders had occasionally also talked of expelling the non-tribal dikus from the region. This campaign against the non-tribal inhabitants of the region when juxtaposed against the fact that only about a third of the total population of the Jharkhand region was classified as tribal (chapter 4), points to a not-too-practical political agenda. Any mobilisation on the basis of an exclusive tribal identity had mixed possibilities in a competitive political system in 1951–52. It was a time when most people believed in Nehru's vision of a modern, self-reliant and secular India, and the credentials of the self-proclaimed socialistic State were yet to be tarnished.

It must also be noted that the 1952 general election was held at a time when the political climate of the country was quite different. There were great expectations from the newly independent

Indian state and it was hoped that the pace of development would soon accelerate to a level whereby a decade of concerted policy effort would solve most of the development-related problems. This was reflected in the fact that most of the constitutional provisions such as reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes were conceived for a mere ten years. In this context, it is hardly surprising that other issues such as tribal identity were taking precedence over the development issues.

Undoubtedly, the vision of administrative autonomy for the region held considerable appeal for the tribal as well as the non-tribal voters in the initial phase. However, the slogans like "Jharkhand will come and outsider will be banished" and "Jharkhand for tribal people only", along with the politically significant trappings of tribal symbolism (chapter 3), ensured that whatever appeal the administrative autonomy vision might have held for the general population, it did not translate into a majority of parliamentary seats for the Jharkhandi groups (even though they had a significantly high share of the votes). In fact, the heavy emphasis on the tribal heritage of the region was one of the factors that was to gradually deprive the JHP and other Jharkhandi political groups of any significant political presence in the region, after the 1957 general election.

However, as noted earlier, the level of development was not a significant issue for the Jharkhandi leaders in the 1952 election. Their concern was to preserve the uniqueness and separateness of the tribal way of life, as is evident in the arguments in their memoranda to the States Reorganisation Commission. They emphasised the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic difference of the region. This point of view was reinforced by the large-scale demonstrations by Jharkhandi leaders and their largely tribal followers. These demonstrations depended heavily on large numbers of the tribal population and tribal symbolism, such as bows and arrows and the cock (chapter 3), in order to impress upon the SRC the need to create a tribal state based on tribal separateness.

General election of 1957

The Jharkhandi groups managed to win more seats in the 1957 general election, though there was a slight decline in the percent-

age of votes that they polled. The close contest with the INC in some constituencies was symptomatic of the gradual decline in popular support for the Jharkhandi groups, which was to follow in the next few years. Also noticeable in this election was the rising support for the leftist politics in the region.

In the 1957 election, the Jharkhandi parties won eight of the twelve seats[9] in the region (table 69). The Jharkhandi parties retained an overwhelming degree of electoral support in these eight constituencies by polling an average of 50 per cent of the votes cast. In this election, the Jharkhandi parties had a noticeable electoral presence in every constituency and polled an average of 47 per cent of the votes in the whole region (table 70). In the Lok Sabha election of 1957, the Jharkhandi parties thus dominated the electoral results. Hence, it is correct to say that the 1957 election marked the most glorious electoral performance of the Jharkhandi groups.

Despite the dominance of the Jharkhandi parties, national political parties started making inroads into the Jharkhand region with this election. The INC won four seats and its candidates were able to secure a decent electoral support of 35 per cent or more in these four seats. In this election, the leftist parties also emerged on the electoral horizon of the Jharkhand region. The CPI candidates figured amongst the first five in two constituencies and gained significant electoral support. Beginning with this election, Jharkhand, thus, was gradually integrated into the national political system. As a result, the issue of a separate Jharkhand state took a back seat for some years, and the poor performance of the development machinery ensured that the socio-economic issues gradually started taking precedence over the issue of a separate Jharkhandi identity.

The prospects of a meaningful and mutually beneficial exchange of resources between the State and the Jharkhandi population were remote in the political system dominated by Jharkhandi parties. The electorate offered substantial support to the Jharkhandi parties in the 1952 and 1957 elections. Notwithstanding the degree of electoral support for them, the Jharkhandi parties failed to secure a separate province of Jharkhand or a better policy response to the development problems in the region. The perpetual divisiveness amongst the leaders had an important role to play in

Table 69: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1957 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	2	CSPJ 66.0 Vijaya Raje (W)	INC 34.0 G. Bhattacharya	–	–	–
Dhanbad	4	INC 48.1 Prabhat C. Bose	CPI 20.4 Kanailal Pal	PSP 19.4	JHP 12.1	–
Dumka	7	JHP 25.6 Suresh C. Chaudhary	JHP 22.9 Debi Soren	INC 16.6	INC 15.0	PSP 8.1
Giridih	4	CSPJ 51.3 Qazi S. A. Matin	INC 30.9 N. P. Sinha	CPI 11.4	PSP 6.4	–
Hazaribagh	3	CSPJ 67.7 L. R. Laxmi (W)	INC 24.1 Badruzzaman Khan	JHP 8.2	–	–
Jamshedpur	4	INC 35.5 Mohindra K. Ghosh	JHP 29.5 Eric Da Costa	IND 19.0	IND 16.0	–
Lohardaga	4	JHP 43.9 Ignes Beck	INC 30.3 Jithan Kharwar	IND 16.6	IND 9.2	–
Palamu	5	INC 40.8 Gajendra P. Singh	CSPJ 24.1 Ramavtar Sharma	JHP 15.1	PSP 13.3	IND 6.7

Table 69 continued

Table 69 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Rajmahal	4	INC 47.7 Paika Murmu	JHP 45.1 Robert S. Basra	IND 4.9	IND 2.9	–
Ranchi East	7	JHP 34.6 Minoo R. Masani	INC 32.0 Ibrahim Ansari	IND 12.1	IND 10.9	IND 3.8
Ranchi West	5	JHP 60.3 Jaipal Singh	INC 25.2 C. Karketta	IND 6.0	IND 5.1	IND 3.4
Singhbum	5	JHP 51.8 Shambu C. Godsora	IND 15.7 Sidui Hembrom	PSP 12.2	IND 12.0	IND 8.4

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.

Table 70: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1957 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1957	46.51	46.51	50.15	8 out of 12*

* See note 8 at the end of this chapter.

this failure of the Jharkhandi groups (chapter 3). The 1951–61 decade saw deterioration in the development profile of the region. The electorate realised that if they continued to extend electoral support to Jharkhandi parties, they would not be able to exploit other avenues for an exchange of resources with the State. Consequently, as will be analysed below, the electorate of the region gradually started attaching more importance to the development issues and paid less credence to the more ascriptive tribal-identity issues.

Decline in Popular and Electoral Support for Jharkhandi Groups

The failure of the JHP and other Jharkhandi groups to secure a Jharkhand state had not led the Jharkhandi electorate to withdraw their support for such political formations. This is evidenced in the large electoral support to the Jharkhandi groups in the 1957 election. However, the immense popularity of the Jharkhandi groups started declining due to the deteriorating development profile of the region. The electorate realised the inability of the Jharkhandi parties to engage in a mutually beneficial exchange of resources with the State and gradually shifted their support to other political groups. Moreover, the Jharkhandi parties still leaned heavily on the tribal population for their electoral support, despite the scenario of a declining share of tribals in the Jharkhand population. From 37 per cent in 1951, the population of Scheduled Tribes in the region diminished to 34 per cent in 1961 (tables 2 and 17 and chart 1).[10] Although 94 per cent of the total

ST population of Bihar resided in the Jharkhand region in 1961 (up from 85 per cent in 1951), they were losing their political dominance.[11] This went on to affect the political success of the Jharkhandi groups, which was premised on the region's tribal characteristics.

The immediate result of the reorganisation of states, following the recommendations of the SRC report, was that the Jharkhand region came to represent an even larger proportion of the total land area of Bihar. It now comprised 46 per cent of the total land area of Bihar. Accordingly, there was also a slight increase in the percentage of population residing in Jharkhand. Jharkhandis now represented almost a quarter of the total population of Bihar (see chapter 4 and chart 1).

As far as the development indicators were concerned, the data for 1961 offer a mixed picture. Agriculture remained the dominant source of livelihood in Bihar as a whole as well as in the Jharkhand region. Total agricultural production in Jharkhand had not grown in the period 1949–50 to 1961–62 (tables 4 and 23). In the same period, the graph of agricultural production in the whole of Bihar climbed quite steeply (chart 2). Moreover, in 1961–62, Jharkhand produced only 39 per cent of the total paddy and 15 per cent of the total maize produced in Bihar (compared to 42 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, in 1949–50) (tables 4 and 23). This indicates that growth in agriculture in Bihar as a whole was much faster than in the Jharkhand region. Similarly, by 1961–62, only 12 per cent of the total irrigated area of Bihar was in Jharkhand (table 26) compared to 19 per cent in 1951–52 (*Bihar Statistical Handbook, 1951,* 1953), but the proportion of area irrigated by government canals in Jharkhand increased. However, efforts to increase agricultural production had succeeded better in Bihar as a whole than in Jharkhand. Charts 3 and 4 further amplify this picture of weaker efforts in increasing agricultural output in Jharkhand. As is clear from chart 3, the graph for agricultural loans disbursed in Jharkhand shows a modest decline whereas the graph for Bihar as a whole displays a steep rise for the period 1950–51 to 1959–60.

The employment figures for 1961 indicate a rise in total employment rates in Bihar as a whole as well as the Jharkhand region. Total employment levels in Jharkhand rose to over 50 per

cent and about 41 per cent in the whole of Bihar (table 22). However, in view of the fact that 1961 was the first year when data about workers was collected,[12] the modest rise does not indicate a better economic scenario in Jharkhand. The proof of this argument is the fact that, on the one hand, we notice a poorer performance of agriculture whereas, on the other hand, the total percentage of population employed in agriculture appears to have increased between 1951 and 1961 (chart 5). Surely, a declining agricultural sector cannot provide gainful employment for a larger percentage of the population. This indicates that the significant rise in employment rates is a statistical artefact and not a fact.[13]

Literacy and health seem to be the only two components of public policy that showed a better profile in 1961. Literacy rates in the Jharkhand region grew at a faster pace than in Bihar as a whole (chart 6). Besides, the figures for infant mortality and death rates in Jharkhand also showed a better performance than in Bihar as a whole (chart 7).

The rate of investment in the Jharkhand region had noticeably fallen in the previous decade (such as investment in agricultural loans and comparative investment in the government irrigation schemes), but tax collection from the industrial sector such as the tax on electricity consumption increased (chart 8). This pattern indicates that Jharkhand had started to emerge as almost an internal colony of Bihar.

Thus, after two five-year-plans, two general elections and a decade of independent Indian governance, the Jharkhand region was relatively worse off with regard to many indicators of development and had grown at only a modest rate, as regards others. A modest improvement can be noticed in some development indicators, but other indicators that would point to the existence of a vibrant and efficient public policy in operation, had performed poorly in Jharkhand in the decade 1951–61. Consequently, one may speculate that the modest improvement in the development profile (such as literacy, infant mortality and death rates) had been, to a large extent if not solely, dependent on private initiatives.[14]

The 1962 general election

The third general election was held in 1962. Unlike the development profile of this period, the election results of the 1962 gen-

eral election showed a significant change in the popular support to various political parties in the region.

By 1962, the JHP had been in a state of decline (chapter 3). The electorate had started doubting the sincerity of the JHP and there was internal dissension within the ranks of the party. Even the tribal electorate of the region, which was the mainstay of the JHP, started showing overt signs of political disenchantment. Moreover, the issue of a separate Jharkhand state also declined in importance as it became clear that such a move would benefit the majority of the non-tribal sections of the population on account of the fact that they were more educated and aware of policy measures. Consequently, it became clear that the issue of tribal identity and a separate state based on it (the main plank of the Jharkhandi groups) was to be relegated to the political backwaters of the region.

As the electorate became more experienced in the intricacies of representative democracy, they realised that despite having won majority of the seats from the Jharkhand region in the previous election, the Jharkhandi groups were still a minority in the state and central legislatures. Hence, they would not be able to derive any substantial policy measures for the region. Besides, the mainstream parties also robbed the Jharkhandi agenda of some of its effectiveness by talking of treating the development problem of the Jharkhand region in a way different from the rest of Bihar and the country.

Against this background, the 1962 general election threw up a new set of political configurations. The disarray in the political resources of the Jharkhandi groups was so acute that they did not even bother to contest the seat of Chatra that had traditionally returned a Jharkhandi candidate.

The Jharkhandi groups managed to win only three of the thirteen seats in the Jharkhand region, with an average of 49 per cent of the votes in these three seats (tables 71 and 72). The votes polled by the Jharkhandi parties added up to an average of only 22 per cent in all the constituencies of the Jharkhand region. They no longer had an electoral presence amongst the first five candidates in the rest of the constituencies of Jharkhand. The average percentage of votes polled by the Jharkhandi groups in the constituencies where they figured amongst the first five can-

Table 71: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1962 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	2	SWA 62.5 Vijaya Raje (W)	INC 37.5 Tribhuwan Nath	–	–	–
Dhanbad	7	INC 37.8 P. R. Chakravarti	SWA 25.6 S. Trigunait	IND 17.3	CPI 11.4	SP 4.2
Dumka*	3	INC 37.7 Satya Charan Besra	JHP 36.9 Debi Soren	IND 25.3	–	–
Giridih	5	SWA 40.6 Bateshwar Singh	INC 37.8 C. Bhattacharya	CPI 10.8	PSP 5.7	IND 5.2
Godda	5	INC 42.7 P. D. Himatsingka	JHP 32.0 Mohan S. Oberoi	SWA 11.2	CPI 10.2	IND 3.9
Hazaribagh	3	SWA 66.8 Basant N. Singh	INC 28.4 M. A. Ansari	JHP 4.8	–	–
Jamshedpur	5	CPI 43.0 Udaikar Mishra	INC 31.6 N. C. Mukherjee	JHP 17.0	IND 4.6	SWA 3.9
Lohardaga*	3	SWA 44.2 David Munzni	INC 31.7 Kartik Oraon	JHP 24.1	–	–

Table 71 continued

Table 71 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Palamu	4	SWA 58.6 S. Manjari (W)	INC 26.8 Gajendra P. Singh	PSP 7.5	JHP 7.1	–
Rajmahal#	3	JHP 52.8 Iswar Marandi	INC 39.6 Paika Murmu	IND 7.6	–	–
Ranchi East	8	SWA 32.3 Prashant K. Ghosh	INC 28.5 Ibrahim Ansari	JHP 22.0	IND 7.6	IND 5.3
Ranchi West*	3	JHP 52.6 Jaipal Singh	SWA 26.7 Joseph Tigga	INC 20.8	–	–
Singhbum*	5	JHP 42.5 Haricharan Soy	INC 28.4 Lakho Bodra	IND 17.2	PSP 7.0	SP 4.9

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

didates was down to 29 per cent (table 72). Besides, the sweeping majorities that the Jharkhandi candidates polled in the seats that they won were a thing of the past. Jaipal Singh and Iswar Marandi, two legendary figures of the Jharkhand movement, did manage to poll more than 50 per cent of the votes, but it was a far cry from the three-fourths majority that they used to poll in the previous elections.

Table 72: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1962 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1962	29.18	22.44	49.3	3 out of 13

Thus, the declining development profile and the absence of any noticeable improvement as a result of government policy initiatives had their toll on the popular support which the Jharkhandi political formations, particularly the JHP, enjoyed. In many ways, this marked the end of an era of overwhelming popular support enjoyed by the Jharkhandi groups. There are a number of other related reasons for the decline in the popularity of and electorate support for the Jharkhandi groups: the growing percentage of the non-tribal population in the electorate of the Jharkhand region combined with the increasing political heterogeneity of the tribal population and the poor performance of the policy implementation machinery. As has emerged in chapter 4, the development indicators had not improved in the Jharkhand region (in some cases the situation had worsened) during the period of hegemony of the Jharkhandi parties. The JHP had failed to translate its dominance in the region into political strength and secure a better allocation of development funds and initiatives. Hence, the decline of the party is not surprising.

This change in the popular support for the Jharkhandi groups can be understood within the framework of the Modified

Resource Dependence Model. When faced with an inefficient and ineffective policy implementation, electoral support (resource controlled by the electorate) was quickly withdrawn and invested in another national party in the hope of securing a better policy environment and initiatives (resources controlled by the State and the political party in power). Thus, the electorate tried another avenue for a mutually beneficial exchange of resources with the State. As will be seen in the rest of the chapter, in the years to come, this strategic use of the resource of political patronage enjoyed by the electorate was utilised by the population of Jharkhand in a number of ways. They learnt to combine the resource of political patronage with another resource vested in their numbers: namely, the resource of political threat to the regime by agitational politics to secure a better public policy response. Such strategic use of political resources vested in the general public secured a better voice for the development problems of the region as well as secured some degree of autonomy, before finally leading to the creation of the state of Jharkhand in November 2000.

Desire for Change and Multi-partyism in Jharkhand

Soon after the 1962 general election, the Jharkhand Party merged with the Congress. The latter realised that a stable support base in the Jharkhand region had to include the tribal population that had previously supported the JHP. On the other hand, the JHP realised that they had lost electoral support on account of their divisiveness and failure to secure a better policy intervention in the Jharkhand region. The merger of the JHP with the INC provided the Jharkhandi leaders an opportunity to contain these cleavages amongst them by utilising the umbrella character of the INC.

Besides, the Jharkhandi leaders felt that the twin goals of creation of a separate state and a better public policy initiative for the Jharkhand region could be pursued better from within the INC than as one of the many parties in opposition. Within the Congress, the Jharkhandi leaders were accommodated as ministers and as heads of various development bodies, but precious little was done on the ground in terms of development. Gradually,

the merger started showing signs of strain mainly due to dissension among the Jharkhandi groups within the INC. The erstwhile leaders of the JHP were caught up in the internal power struggles of the INC and failed to secure the efforts of the government machinery for development of their region, which led to further dissensions among them. The results of this intricate political game and the lack of effort as regards development policy further reinforced the trend towards multi-partyism in the Jharkhand region.

The 1967 general election

The Jharkhandi groups (excluding those small splinter groups that were not a part of the INC and were, therefore, members of the opposition) fared poorly in the 1967 general election. The electorate felt betrayed by the Jharkhandi leaders who had become a part of the INC. The Jharkhandi parties did not carry much political legitimacy in the region any more.

Since the JHP was a part of the INC in the 1967 election, it is not possible to isolate the performance of the Jharkhandi political groups. However, there are some leaders who were renowned Jharkhandis and their fortunes can be analysed in this election.

Only three constituencies returned a distinctly Jharkhandi candidate. Jaipal Singh contesting under the INC banner was once again returned, this time from the constituency of Khunti. But his majority was reduced to half, and he secured only 26 per cent (as opposed to 53 per cent in 1962) of the votes (tables 71 and 73). Singhbhum also elected a Jharkhandi leader as a Congress candidate. Here again, this candidate was elected with a much reduced majority of 23 per cent (compared to 43 per cent of the votes for the JHP candidate in 1962 and 52 per cent in 1957). The Rajmahal seat was also won by a Jharkhandi candidate representing the INC, Iswar Marandi, with 28 per cent of the votes (he had won the seat in 1962 with 53 per cent of the votes). The Congress did manage to win nine of the thirteen Lok Sabha seats from the region, but the overwhelming electoral majorities (in terms of the percentage of votes) that Jharkhandi leaders had enjoyed in the past was not extended to the INC candidates.

Table 73: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1967 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	5	IND 34.6 Vijaya Raje (W)	INC 23.1 S. P. Bhandari	SSP 18.9	BJS 15.7	PSP 7.7
Dhanbad	6	JKD 36.6 L. R. Laxmi (W)	INC 25.7 A. P. Sharma	SSP 12.0	CPM 10.1	BJS 9.3
Dumka*	5	INC 38.8 Satya Charan Besra	CPI 31.0 B. Marandi	BJS 12.4	IND 10.7	IND 7.0
Giridih	4	INC 35.1 Imteyaz Ahmed	IND 33.2 M. Oberoi	BJS 18.9	CPI 12.8	–
Godda	5	INC 38.2 P. D. Himatsingka	BJS 28.0 S. Tulsiyan	IND 13.3	PSP 13.2	IND 7.4
Hazaribagh	4	IND 44.4 Basant N. Singh	INC 33.9 Damodar Pandey	BJS 14.8	CPI 7.0	–
Jamshedpur	6	INC 37.2 Shiva C. Prasad	CPI 17.1 Udaikar Mishra	IND 16.5	BJS 17.1	CPM 11.4
Khunti*	9	INC 26.0 Jaipal Singh	IND 23.1 P. Kachchap	BJS 16.6	SWA 13.7	IND 6.1

Table 73 continued

Table 73 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Lohardaga*	6	INC 39.8 Kartik Oraon	BJS 18.4 S. Baraik	IND 17.0	IND 11.1	SWA 10.1
Palamu#	5	INC 43.0 Kamla Kumari (W)	SSP 23.6 J. Ram	JKD 14.8	BJS 11.5	IND 7.1
Rajmahal*	6	INC 27.9 Iswar Marandi	SWA 23.6 Robert S. Basra	IND 18.5	BJS 15.4	IND 7.9
Ranchi	10	INC 19.6 Prashant K. Ghosh	BJS 17.1 A. N. Sinha	IND 13.4	IND 11.4	IND 10.5
Singhbum*	6	IND 23.4 Kolai Birua	BJS 20.7 M. L. Soy	INC 17.9	SSP 17.7	IND 12.4

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

As is evident from the above analysis, there were two significant features of this election. In 1967, there was largely a pattern of voting against the sitting members of Parliament in the Jharkhand region, as elsewhere in India. It was clearly a vote for change in representation. Some candidates who represented the same parties were most likely victorious on the basis of their personal reputations rather than the party/issues which they represented. This is reflected in the fact that a few members of Parliament who chose to contest the elections as independent candidates rather than represent a party, retained their seats. For instance, both Basant N. Singh in Hazaribagh and Vijaya Raje in Chatra retained their seats.

The second pattern, which is quite clear from the results of the 1967 election is that the days of single-party rule in the Jharkhand region (as in the rest of India, though not quite so clear then) were over by the end of the sixties. The fact that the INC did win nine of the thirteen seats cannot be seen as one-party dominance because the percentage of votes polled by the INC (even with Jharkhandi candidates representing it) was far lower than that enjoyed by the JHP and other Jharkhandi parties in their heydays. Besides, this election also offered a rare opportunity to the INC. It had managed to tap into a combination of support bases such as a vote for change, Jharkhandi support-base, and personal reputation of the Jharkhandi leaders. The Congress also benefited from the rational choice of the Jharkhandi voters in favour of a party which was likely to form a stable government as they were tired of the divided JHP that had not managed to secure better development of the Jharkhand region. The INC as a party did not represent any Jharkhandi ideology but performed quite well. Also important was the increasing electoral support for the leftist groups and parties. This also reflected a growing confidence among the Jharkhandi electorate that was now willing to extend political patronage to any political group that it thought was capable of engaging in a meaningful exchange of resources with the State and the rest of the political system.

Thus, starting from the 1962 election and culminating in the 1967 general election, the electorate clearly rejected the Jharkhand state as a solution to the issue of declining development profile. Although the aspiration for a separate state and the recognition

of the Jharkhandi identity were not quite dead, the issue of a proper and efficient policy implementation and socio-economic development took priority over the creation of a separate state. The electorate used the most potent weapon they had in their arsenal—namely, the withdrawal of electoral support for the Jharkhandi parties (who had promised a lot but not delivered much)—to make their point.

Apart from a desire for change among the electorate, the 1967 election also reflected a redefinition of the terms of resource dependence, which had long-term consequences. It appears that the Jharkhandi electorate realised that the economic potential of the Jharkhand region was important for the entire country. Consequently, it was willing to engage in a national-level exchange of resources through the avenues offered by the Congress. The fourth general election, thus, marked the emergence of multiparty politics in Jharkhand and also, significantly, the growing distrust and disenchantment of the electorate with the Jharkhandi leaders.

This era in Jharkhandi politics can also be understood within the operational dynamics of the Modified Resource Dependence Model. The electorate used the resources at their command, namely the electoral patronage of certain parties/candidates, in the hope of being able to pressurise the State to share with them the resources which it commanded—development funds and efficient policy implementation. However, this does not mean that the electorate was able to secure an equitable share of the resources which the State commanded, in the coming years. This struggle on the part of the State and the electorate to share resources under the control of the other became more intense in the coming years. The multiplicity of political parties and the continued inefficiency of the policy delivery mechanism led to an even more fluid political dynamics in the Jharkhand region.

Jharkhandi Parties Fare Badly

After the 1967 election, from the morass of the declining influence of the Jharkhandi groups in the region and divided political loyalties, there emerged numerous politically active groups. All of them claimed to be the true representatives of the cause of Jharkhand and the true successor of the erstwhile JHP. Although

the political climate of the region had changed drastically since the 1961 census, the development profile hardly showed any sign of accelerated growth.

By 1971, as discussed in chapter 4, the population in Bihar and the Jharkhand region had grown rapidly. This growth altered the demographic balance of the Jharkhand region vis-à-vis Bihar as a whole. By 1971, 28 per cent of the population of Bihar lived in Jharkhand as opposed to 25 per cent in 1961 (chart 1 and tables 16 and 32). Also pertinent was the fact that the ST component of the Jharkhand population was reduced to 29 per cent, from 34 per cent in 1961 (tables 17 and 33 and chart 1). This change in the demographic profile had political repercussions in terms of still further reduced chances of success for particularistic tribal politics.

As far as the development indicators were concerned, the overall literacy rate had shown an improvement during the decade 1951–61. However, during 1961–71, the rate of growth in literacy had slowed down. Chart 6 and chapter 4 tell us that in the Jharkhand region as well as in Bihar as a whole, there was hardly any improvement in literacy rates. This indicates a poorer rate of success in the implementation of public policy in both Bihar as a whole as well as Jharkhand, in this decade. The health indicators in themselves reflect a positive shift, but in comparison with Bihar, the rate of improvement in Jharkhand was modest. The patterns for death and infant mortality represented in chart 7 indicate that by 1973, infant mortality in Jharkhand had shown a substantial decline to 28 per 1,000 live births (from 59 in 1961). The same figures for Bihar as a whole were 33 in 1973 compared to 87 in 1961.

The declining development profile of the Jharkhand region was also reflected in the occupational patterns. The total percentage of population gainfully employed in Jharkhand in 1971 fell to about 30 from more than 50 in 1961. This decline was in the agricultural as well as non-agricultural occupations[15] (chart 5). Similar patterns can be discerned for Bihar as a whole as well. Chapter 4 has analysed the declining agricultural production in Jharkhand and the poor efforts to improve it in the decade 1961–71. This is reflected in the occupational patterns as well as in the irrigation potential of the region (chart 9). As far as the

investments in the agricultural sectors were concerned, the loans disbursed in the Jharkhand region rose modestly compared with the substantial hike in Bihar as a whole (chart 3). These minor improvements fade into insignificance when compared with the strides made in Bihar as a whole.

Thus, while the development profile of the region had been going from bad to worse in the 1961–71 decade, the political agenda of the region was getting more and more complicated. The Jharkhandi leaders within the INC and outside of it realised that the cause of a Jharkhand state and the development of the region had been injured by the divisions within their ranks. Thus, desperate measures undertaken in 1968 to salvage their political influence in the region led to the creation of a loosely united All India Jharkhand Party (AIJP). This new political entity, the AIJP, was rife with mutual rivalries from its very inception and was soon divided into two factions (see chapter 3). On the other hand, the urban and industrial factions of the Jharkhand movement began emerging after the debacle of the 1967 election, and multiple groups emerged which tried to draw upon the legacy of tribal heritage to further their political aims.

The rate of development in the region had worsened during the previous decade or so and the popular support for the Jharkhandi groups reached a nadir by the fourth general election in 1967. This trend continued in the 1971 election. The electorate had lost all faith in the promises of the Jharkhandi groups.

Fifth general election

In the fifth general election in 1971, the role played by the Jharkhandi group was at best marginal and at worst non-existent. Once again, the electorate sought to exercise the power vested in them by the democratic process and paid little heed to the appeals of the faction-riddled Jharkhandi groups.

Individual Jharkhandi leaders such as Iswar Marandi who won the Rajmahal seat as an INC candidate and N. E. Horo who won the Khunti seat as an independent candidate performed well, but political formations representing the Jharkhandi ideology, on the whole, faired poorly (table 74).

The Jharkhandi political groups were able to win only one (Singhbhum) of the thirteen Lok Sabha seats from the Jharkhand

Table 74: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1971 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	4	INC 43.2 Shankar D. Singh	JP 36.8 Vijaya Raje (W)	SSP 18.8	IND 1.2	–
Dhanbad	15	INC 46.4 Ram N. Sharma	CPM 15.7 Vinod B. Mahto	AIJP 10.3	CPI 7.0	BJS 5.3
Dumka*	8	INC 35.4 Satya Charan Besra	CPI 29.1 Satrughan Besra	BJS 16.5	IND 13.4	BPHJ 2.7
Giridih	6	INC 38.3 C. Bhattacharya	INCO 35.9 Krishna B. Sahay	CPI 18.4	IND 3.8	AIJP 2.7
Godda	6	INC 47.6 Jagdish N. Mandal	INCO 22.6 P. D. Himatsingka	IND 9.7	BPHJ 9.0	IND 6.3
Hazaribagh	7	INC 32.8 Damodar Pandey	JP 26.5 L. R. Laxmi (W)	BJS 17.7	SSP 8.9	IND 8.9
Jamshedpur	12	INC 27.5 Swaran S. Sokhi	CPI 27.4 Kedar Das	AIJP 17.1	BJS 12.7	IND 7.3
Khunti*	8	IND 30.5 Niral E. Horo	BJS 28.8 Karia Munda	AIJP 19.3	IND 16.5	IND 2.2

Table 74 continued

Table 74 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Lohardaga*	8	INC 53.8 Kartik Oraon	BJS 18.8 Ropna Oraon	IND 14.8	IND 3.8	AIJP 3.6
Palamu#	7	INC 51.3 Kamla Kumari (W)	BJS 30.7 Ramdeni Ram	SSP 9.5	IND 2.6	IND 2.2
Rajmahal*	8	INC 44.8 Iswar Marandi	BPHJ 29.8 Justin Richard	BJS 16.2	IND 3.3	IND 2.1
Ranchi	12	INC 43.3 Prashant K. Ghosh	BJS 34.4 Rudra P. Sarangi	IND 7.2	AIFB 6.7	AIJP 2.4
Singhbhum*	9	AIJP 40.7 Moran S. Purty	IND 25.5 D. N. Champia	IND 13.2	IND 6.3	IND 4.2

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

region; and that too a seat reserved for Scheduled Tribes. Even in this constituency, the AIJP candidate polled only 41 per cent of the votes compared to an average of about 49 per cent votes polled by Jharkhandi candidates in the seats won by them in 1962 (tables 74 and 72).

Table 75: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1971 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1971	13.76	10.58	40.7	1 out of 13

The same pattern of declining electoral support for the Jharkhandi groups was reflected throughout the region. Overall, the Jharkhandi political groups managed to poll an average of only 11 per cent of the votes in the entire Jharkhand region. In three constituencies, the Jharkhandi political parties/formations had no presence amongst the first five candidates. In the constituencies where they did, they polled an average of 14 per cent compared with 28 per cent in 1962. Clearly, the visible trend of reduced electoral support for the Jharkhandi groups in the region which had started in 1962 continued in 1971 (chart 10). Furthermore, the constituency of Dumka (ST constituency), which had once been one of the more important Jharkhandi support centres, extended very little political backing to the Jharkhandis in the election of 1971. The 3 per cent votes polled by one of the splinter groups under the banner of Bihar Prant Hul Jharkhand Party was the only noticeable presence of the Jharkhandi groups in this constituency.

It is noteworthy that the leftist political groups enjoyed greater electoral support in the 1971 election than the Jharkhandi political formations. The relationship between the decline in popular support for the Jharkhandi groups and the development and socio-economic problems of the region is attested to by the fact

that leftist and socialist parties were beginning to command significant popular support. These leftist parties sought to address the very problems which had emerged due to the neglect of the development agenda of the region by the policy process. Undoubtedly, these parties did not win many seats in the Jharkhand region, but their share in the percentage of votes is noteworthy and in a few constituencies, they emerged as the runner-up party (table 74).

The centrality of development policy in this shift of electoral patronage is evident if the political stance of the INC vis-à-vis a separate state of Jharkhand is taken into account (see chapter 7). The fact that electoral support for the INC had improved (table 74) despite its extreme reluctance to consider a separate state indicates the important place of the State's development effort in the politics of the Jharkhand region. The INC had used the political rhetoric of *garibi hatao* (remove poverty) in the 1970s. This had yielded a rich electoral harvest for the INC throughout India, and Jharkhand was no different—reflecting the value attached by the Jharkhandi electorate to a better public policy initiative for the development of the region. The fact that the INC did manage to win eleven of the thirteen seats demonstrates that the Jharkhandi electorate was eager to extend all possible political patronage to the INC in the hope of better policy response. The declining development profile over the past two decades had made the problems of the region acute, and a better exchange of resources on the development-policy front was clearly more important to the electorate than statehood for Jharkhand.

In sum, the desperate efforts made in 1969 to salvage the fast declining popular political support for the Jharkhandi groups did not pay off. The factionalism that was rife within their ranks was one of the factors (see chapter 3). Also important was the fact that despite the electorate having invested almost overwhelming trust in the Jharkhandi groups till 1957, the overall development profile had worsened. The changing political profile of the region was reflected in the rising support for the leftist and national parties. The pattern of increasing support for the national parties, which had emerged in the 1967 election, was clearly evident in the 1971 victory of the INC. The INC won all the seats in the Jharkhand region except for two reserved seats. One of these was

won by the AIJP and the other by the Jharkhandi leader N. E. Horo who had contested as an independent candidate.

The declining agricultural production, worsening educational levels, and general underdevelopment resulting in lower employment opportunities ensured that the issue of a separate state took a back seat. The electorate invested its support in the INC which provided hope of a stable and efficient government at the state level and at the Centre.

Sixth general election

The sixth general election in 1977 was held against the backdrop of the Emergency (imposed under the INC government led by Indira Gandhi) which had been highly unpopular in the whole country. The Jharkhand region was no different, and the INC lost all the seats in the region. Although in the 1971 election it seemed that the INC had come to stay in the region, the backlash of the electorate against the draconian measures and policies of the Emergency era was swift and complete. All the INC candidates and Jharkhandi leaders who had aligned themselves with the INC lost their seats. This trend is reflected in the fact that Moran S. Purty, who had won the Singhbhum seat in the 1971 Lok Sabha election as an AIJP candidate (with 41 per cent of the votes), lost the seat to an AIJP candidate in 1977. Purty fought under the INC banner in 1977 and polled only 14 per cent of the votes (tables 74 and 76).

Despite the anti-INC feeling, the Jharkhandi groups failed to win any more seats in the 1977 general election. The AIJP won the Singhbhum seat with a majority (73 per cent) that was reminiscent of the heyday of the JHP. However, this was the only seat which the Jharkhandi groups won out of a total of fourteen Lok Sabha seats in the region. The average votes polled by these parties in all the constituencies in the Jharkhand region fell, once again, to a mere 9 per cent (table 77). The Jharkhandi parties had no presence amongst the first five candidates in six constituencies in the 1977 election. This inflates the average votes polled by the Jharkhandi parties in the constituencies where they had electoral presence to 16 per cent (tables 76 and 77). However, their electoral appeal had declined both in terms of the number of constituencies

Table 76: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1977 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	5	BLD 75.0 Sukhdeo P. Verma	INC 22.2 Shankar D. Singh	IND 1.4	IND 0.8	IND 0.6
Dhanbad	13	IND 68.7 A. K. Roy	INC 21.3 Ram N. Sharma	CPI 5.9	IND 0.7	IND 0.7
Dumka*	6	BLD 49.5 Bateshwar Hembram	INC 26.6 Prithivi C. Kisku	CPI 16.6	PHJP 4.3	IND 1.8
Giridih	4	BLD 58.4 Ramdas Singh	INC 30.5 Imteyaz Ahmed	IND 8.7	JHP 2.5	–
Godda	5	BLD 70.0 Jagdambi P. Yadav	INC 25.6 Jagdish N. Mandal	IND 1.8	IND 1.5	PHJP 1.1
Hazaribagh	5	BLD 64.7 Basant N. Singh	INC 15.6 Damodar Pandey	CPI 12.4	IND 4.4	IND 2.9
Jamshedpur	12	BLD 50.2 Rudra P. Sarangi	INC 25.8 V. G. S. Gopal	CPI 12.6	JHP 3.7	IND 1.9
Khunti*	5	BLD 50.0 Karia Munda	JHP 31.0 N. E. Horo	IND 16.6	IND 1.3	IND 1.1

Table 76 continued

Table 76 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Kodarma	4	BLD 67.3 Reet Lal P. Verma	INC 21.2 C. Bhattacharya	CPI 8.5	IND 2.9	–
Lohardaga*	5	BLD 56.9 Lalu Oraon	INC 31.0 Kartik Oraon	IND 5.6	JHP 4.0	IND 2.6
Palamu#	7	BLD 77.6 Ramdeni Ram	INC 15.0 Kamla Kumari (W)	IND 2.7	IND 2.1	IND 1.2
Rajmahal*	3	BLD 68.2 Anthony Murmu	INC 25.8 Yogesh C. Murmu	BPHJ 6.1	–	–
Ranchi	13	BLD 49.0 Ravindra Verma	INC 25.5 Shiv Prasad Sahu	IND 8.5	CPM 5.1	IND 3.8
Singhbhum*	9	AIJP 73.3 Bagun Sumbrai,	INC 14.2 Moran S. Purty	JHP 4.4	IND 2.6	IND 1.7

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

where they managed to secure some degree of electoral support as well as in terms of the percentage of the votes polled.

The 1977 election did not reflect a new political trend in the Jharkhand region. No doubt there was large-scale support for the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), but this was more an anti-INC sentiment than a pro-BLD vote. However, the declining electoral support for the Jharkhandi parties in this election was a continuation of a trend evident in the previous elections.

Another notable feature in the election of 1977 was that the Jharkhandi groups had a presence only in the constituencies reserved for the ST. In other constituencies, they did not figure in the tally of first five candidates. It appears that whatever little popular support was left for the political groups premised on the Jharkhandi ideology was restricted to pockets of the tribal population. Their political legitimacy did not mobilise even all the tribals, which is evident in the low level of support in the tribal constituencies. Moreover, there seems to have been a very limited degree of support for them in non-tribal pockets. Thus, the declining support for Jharkhandi groups, which started in the 1960s, was noticed in the 1977 election as well. Faced with the electoral debacle, the JMM and the Jharkhand Alliance (between the Jharkhandi and some leftist leaders of the region) declined to the point of disappearing.

Table 77: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1977 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1977	16.3	9.3	73.3	1 out of 14

The 1977 election reflects yet another element in the changing dynamics of resource dependence in the region. By the mid-1970s, the JMM's agenda of social reform had started finding enthusiastic support amongst the masses (chapter 3). The 1977 election re-

sults indicate that while the electorate was happy to respond to the agenda of social change and cultural revivalism that was proposed by the JMM, it was unwilling to elect the uneasy alliance to represent them in the legislatures. In other words, the masses were unwilling to entrust them with a meaningful exchange of resources with the State.

The lessons learnt in the events which led to the proclamation of Emergency in 1975 had surely taught the masses the value of agitational politics and strength in numbers. Consequently, starting from late 1970s, the agitational agenda of the JMM drew substantial popular support which was reflected in the well-attended rallies and demonstrations. However, as far as electoral support was concerned, the masses chose to invest this element of political resources at their command in the national political parties, which were likely to be in a position to influence the development policy in the Jharkhand region.

The 1980 general election

The unstable government which was formed after the 1977 election did not last its full term and a general election was held again in 1980. The Jharkhandi electorate was all too familiar with the factionalism in the Jharkhandi parties and its effects on the region. Consequently, the Indian National Congress (Indira) (INCI) was voted back and won six of the fourteen Lok Sabha seats in Jharkhand (table 78).

The Janata Party (JP) which had emerged from the numerous mergers and factionalism, of which the BLD was a part, did not fare well in this election. Ironically, the political party that won the most number of the seats—INCI—was itself born out of a second major split in the original INC. Moreover, the JP came second in eight of the fourteen seats in the region. However, a noteworthy feature of this election was an absence of predominance of any one political party/group.

It must be noted that this fluidity in the political dynamics of the region did not do much to improve the electoral fortunes of the Jharkhandi political groups/parties. In the 1980 Lok Sabha election, the Jharkhandi parties once again won only one (Khunti) out of the fourteen Lok Sabha seats in the region, polling 36 per

Table 78: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1980 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	12	INCI 40.0 Ranjit Singh	JP 22.9 Sukhdeo P. Verma	JPS 17.4	IND 7.5	IND 3.2
Dhanbad	20	IND 34.2 A. K. Roy	INCI 30.4 Yogeshwar Prasad	JP 19.6	JPS 6.9	IND 2.7
Dumka*	5	IND 37.5 Shibu Soren	INCI 36.4 Prithivi C. Kisku	JP 12.4	CPI 12.1	JHP 1.5
Giridih	11	IND 35.4 Bindeshwari Dube	JP 26.6 Ramdas Singh	IND 18.9	JPS 8.2	CPI 6.5
Godda	11	INCI 36.6 Saminuddin	JP 27.9 Jagdambi P. Yadav	CPI 16.6	IND 9.5	JPS 5.0
Hazaribagh	10	JP 35.1 Basant N. Singh	INCI 24.4 Azima Hussain (W)	CPI 19.0	JPS 11.1	IND 5.6
Jamshedpur	21	JP 29.2 Rudra P. Sarangi	INCI 25.9 V. G. S. Gopal	CPI 24.4	JHP 5.6	JPS 4.4
Khunti*	14	JHP 36.4 N. E. Horo	JP 26.7 Karia Munda	INCI 20.8	JPS 7.7	IND 1.3

Table 78 continued

Table 78 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Kodarma	9	JP 40.7 Reet Lal P. Verma	INCI 32.3 Javed Warsi	INCU 11.8	IND 8.7	IND 2.2
Lohardaga*	13	INCI 51.5 Kartik Oraon	JP 23.8 Karma Oraon	JPS 10.0	JHP 4.5	IND 3.5
Palamu#	9	INCI 48.3 Kamla Kumari (W)	JP 31.3 Ramdeni Ram	JPS 8.9	IND 4.2	IND 1.7
Rajmahal*	8	INCI 40.4 Seth Hembram	JP 22.3 Palu Hasda	IND 20.1	JPS 11.0	IND 3.1
Ranchi	17	INCI 38.7 Shiv Prasad Sahu	JP 24.8 Shiv Kumar Sinha	JPS 9.7	AIFB 9.4	IND 8.9
Singhbhum*	11	JP 32.4 Bagun Sumbrai	INCI 22.2 Theodore Bodra	IND 20.2	JPS 10.2	JHP 6.6

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

cent of the votes (table 78). Some leaders of the Jharkhand Alliance also won the seats that they had contested as independents. Shibu Soren, the head of JMM, won the Dumka seat with 38 per cent of the votes, and A. K. Roy was successful in Dhanbad, polling 34 per cent of the votes.

However, it is likely that Soren and Roy won their respective seats due to their roles in the left politics in the Jharkhand region during the late 1960s and the 1970s and not because they subscribed to any Jharkhandi ideology. The ideological fluidity of the Jharkhandi parties can also be noted in the fact that Bagun Sumbrai had contested the Singhbhum seat in 1977 as an AIJP candidate, but in the 1980 election, he won the same seat as a JP candidate. This also reflects the fact that personal reputation had come to weigh more than ideological proximity, in the minds of the voters.

The share of the votes polled by the Jharkhandi parties plummeted to an all-time low of 4 per cent (table 79). The Jharkhandi political groups figured among the first five candidates in only four of the fourteen constituencies (table 78). The average votes polled by these parties in such constituencies was 11 per cent. Thus, the electoral decline of the Jharkhandi parties continued in the 1980 election. However, there was a revival in the political fortunes of these groups which was reflected in the mass support to their agitational politics (chapter 3). This, however, did not translate into electoral support for these parties on account of the strategic utilisation of the resources controlled by the electorate.

It is also noteworthy that there had been numerous political splinter groups claiming to represent the cause of Jharkhand in

Table 79: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1980 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1980	10.9	3.9	36.4	1 out of 14

the 1977 election. Of them, only the JHP made any electoral headway in the 1980 election. Although the once dominant JHP was struggling for survival in the electoral contest, national parties who had become major players in the region could not succeed in securing the political support and influence that the JHP had at one time enjoyed. There was an absence of widespread support for the INCI, CPI or JP. The results of this election were as mixed as the development scenario of Jharkhand.

The strategic use of the political resources controlled by the electorate in the 1977 and 1980 elections had not translated into a better development profile in the Jharkhand region. The electorate had shifted their political support from the Jharkhandi groups to the national parties in the hope of being able to derive policy initiatives from them. However, these national political parties had become as faction-riddled as the JHP (with, probably, relatively the least factionalism within the INCI). Consequently, various pockets of the Jharkhand region seemed to be experimenting with parties of all political hues.

Political Choices before the Electorate

By the time the INCI government was formed in 1980, the Tribal Sub-Plan had been operational for nearly six years and the Sixth Five Year Plan was being drafted with the TSP as an important component. However, six years of operation of the TSP did not seem to have generated any major improvements in the development profile of the Jharkhand region.

Demographically, the balance tilted back to the pre-1971 position, with just over a quarter of the population of Bihar residing within the Jharkhand region in 1981. The ST component of the population of Jharkhand also increased to 30 per cent from 29 per cent in 1971 (tables 53 and 33). However, this improvement in the demographic balance was not due to any governmental policy but due to the administrative reorientation of the internal boundaries of Bihar, by virtue of which the Jharkhand region represented only 46 per cent of the land area in 1981 compared to 53 per cent in 1971 (tables 52 and 32).

As far as the development profile of the Jharkhand region was concerned, very few indicators are available for the year 1981.

However, literacy seemed to be the only component of public policy to have shown positive growth. After almost no change in the previous decade, during 1971–81 there was a growth in literacy in Jharkhand from about 22 per cent in 1971 to almost 28 per cent in 1981 (chart 6). There was also a modest growth in education in the Jharkhand region, reflected in the higher percentage of workers educated up to middle-school level (chapter 5). The occupational pattern of the population of Jharkhand showed a small decline in agricultural occupations, but a doubling of the percentage of those in non-agricultural jobs. Overall, there was a rise in gainful employment opportunities from about 30 per cent of the population in 1971 to about 36 per cent in 1981 (chart 5).

Despite the growth in the proportion of those employed in non-agricultural activities in the Jharkhand region, the predominant majority still depended on agriculture for their livelihood. There is no indication of the availability of better agricultural facilities; there was only a extremely modest increase in the total irrigated area in Jharkhand (chart 9). The total area irrigated by governmental canals showed a small increase, but this increase was insignificant compared to a similar increase in Bihar as a whole.

Further, as discussed in chapter 5, the TSP was the only component of public policy that had been showing results. The ST population, thus, demonstrated a higher rate of education and employment. However, these improvements were also quite modest. On the whole, the performance of public policy over the decade 1970–80 had not shown any significant improvement. Further, as discussed in chapter 5, Jharkhand seemed to have become an internal colony of Bihar. In such a development scenario, the political ferment in Jharkhand during the late 1970s and early 1980s is not surprising.

The 1984 general election

The advantage of the marginal improvements in the 1971–81 decade (see chapter 5), was garnered by the INC which performed handsomely in the region. The INC was the undisputed winner in the region in the 1984 general election, winning every seat. The review of the development policies and the vision of the new future that it represented in the 1984 election led the voters to elect the INC.

The INC won this election in the Jharkhand region on account of the enthusiastic support of the electorate as reflected in the sizeable percentage of votes polled by its candidates in all the constituencies of Jharkhand and the size of its winning margin (table 80). Clearly, there was an overwhelming support for the INC in the region in the eighth general election. It seems that the electorate supported stability and the relative lack of factionalism which the INC provided, in order to further the slight improvement in the development profile of the region.

However, the 1984 election was not an unqualified success for the INC. There was indeed a massive electoral support for the INC, but caution needs to be exercised while analysing this election as a part of a long-term electoral trend in the Jharkhand region. The reason for this caution is the fact that this election was held in the aftermath of the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Hence, this unprecedented result was partly due to a sympathy-vote for the INC.

The performance of Jharkhandi groups in this election continued downhill. They failed to win any seats in the entire region in the 1984 election (table 80). In eight constituencies, the Jharkhandi parties figured among the first five candidates, and they polled an average of 7 per cent of the votes in the Jharkhand region (compared to 4 per cent in 1980). In the eight constituencies where the JMM had electoral presence, the percentage of votes polled in 1980 and 1984 hovered between 11–12 (tables 79 and 81).

The electorate was unwilling to elect ineffective Jharkhandi leaders who had in the past failed to secure any public policy initiatives. The development profile of the Jharkhand region had deteriorated the most when there had been sizeable support for the Jharkhandi leaders. Further, the shifting stances of the Jharkhandi leaders across the spectrum—from extreme Left to Centre—did not go down well with the voters. They, perhaps, reasoned that it was better to vote for the INC who would form the government and therefore could be forced to engage in an exchange of public-policy resources under its control, in return for political support. The JMM or other such Jharkhandi political groups were closely aligned with the INC but were faction-ridden political entities. Consequently, they had very little political clout to engage in any meaningful exchange of resources with the INC-controlled government.

Table 80: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1984 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	13	INC 56.4 Yogeshwar P. Yogesh	ICJ 14.6 Sukhdeo P. Verma	BJP 14.4	IND 7.2	IND 2.3
Dhanbad	24	INC 41.4 Shankar D. Singh	IND 28.7 A. K. Roy	BJP 14.3	JP 11.2	IND 0.6
Dumka*	8	INC 53.9 Prithivi C. Kisku	JMM 27.7 Shibu Soren	CPI 15.2	IND 1.3	IND 0.8
Giridih	9	INC 53.5 Sarfraj Ahmed	IND 19.4 Binod B. Mahto	BJP 18.0	JP 3.3	JMM 1.9
Godda	12	INC 45.4 Saminuddin	BJP 17.0 Falguni P. Yadav	JMM 16.3	CPI 14.6	LKD 1.7
Hazaribagh	13	INC 47.8 Damodar Pandey	CPI 31.4 B. Mehto	BJP 7.1	JMM 4.9	JP 2.9
Jamshedpur	17	INC 45.7 Gopeshwar	CPI 30.4 Tikaram Manjhi	BJP 10.4	JMM 5.2	JP 3.3
Khunti	9	INC 41.1 Simon Tigga	IND 27.2 N. E. Horo	BJP 17.7	IND 9.1	IND 1.4

Table 80 continued

Table 80 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Kodarma	13	INC 58.8 Tilak Dhari Singh	BJP 27.4 Reet Lal P. Verma	IND 2.9	JP 2.8	IND 2.1
Lohardaga*	14	INC 59.6 Sumati Oraon (W)	BJP 20.9 Lalit Oraon	JP 7.4	IND 3.9	IND 1.5
Palamu#	6	INC 72.5 Kamla Kumari (W)	JP 19.9 Ram Sunder Das	ICJ 3.3	IND 2.2	IND 1.1
Rajmahal*	10	INC 50.1 Seth Hembram	JMM 24.5 Simon Marandi	CPM 12.6	BJP 8.2	JP 1.8
Ranchi	23	INC 49.5 Shiv Prasad Sahu	BJP 16.5 R. T. Chowdhary	JP 15.5	LKD 5.6	JMM 3.1
Singhbhum*	14	INC 44.5 Bagun Sumbrai	IND 18.5 Devendra Manjhi	JMM 9.0	BJP 8.6	LKD 6.1

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

Table 81: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1984 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1984	11.57	6.61	0	0 out of 14

After the extremely poor performance of the Jharkhandi political interests in the election of 1984, there was a regrouping (as after all elections) of the Jharkhandi leaders. One of the major weaknesses of the Jharkhand movement in the past had been its propensity to splinter and form numerous, mutually exclusive and contesting political entities. As the movement drew heavily on the cultural heritage of the region, the necessity of joint action led to the formation of the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee, to spearhead the struggle for a separate state of Jharkhand as well as to press for policy initiatives for a faster development of the region (chapter 3). In the period between the eighth and ninth general elections, the JCC was active but failed to secure any long-term gains for the region. It staged some successful economic blockades to force the government to accede to their demand, but soon its coherence and initiative slipped away. The JCC and its most vocal component, the AJSU, adopted the classic style of popular politics in India, which may be summed up as 'agitate first, demand later'. The AJSU became a victim of its own success when other constituents of the JCC distanced themselves from it, over the relatively more radical and extreme stance adopted by the AJSU. The Jharkhand movement once again fell into disarray and the political vacuum was filled by the BJP's grass-roots organisation.

Meanwhile, the development initiative of the government in the region continued under the Seventh Five Year Plan. Whether it was able to change anything in the development profile of the region, is another matter.

The 1989 general election

In accordance with the operation of the Modified Resource Dependence Model, the 1989 election demonstrated that the electorate was willing to experiment with newer political parties. After about a decade of enthusiastic support for the INC, the electorate decided that it was time to try other political parties. During the period 1984–89, the development profile did not make great strides, as seen in the discussion of the development profile in 1991 (chapter 5).

Consequently, the electoral results in 1989 showed a wide variety of parties finding political support in the Jharkhand region. The electorate voted for the whole political spectrum from the extreme Left in the guise of the MCOR, to the Right in the form of the BJP. Furthermore, the Janata Dal with its pro-poor and pro-weaker-section policies began making inroads in the INC vote banks (table 82).

The failure of the political process to generate adequate avenues for the exchange of resources between the Jharkhandi electorate and the State led the BJP to win five out of the fourteen seats in 1989 (table 82). Apart from this, there is another important reason for the splendid performance by this relative newcomer to the political scene. Faced with a declining development profile and the failure to engage in any meaningful exchange of resources with the State through the avenues of the available political parties, the support for the demand for a separate state was again finding popular support. The support for the agitational politics of the JMM and the AJSU are a reminder of this. In this scenario, popular support for the BJP grew, as it was the only national political party which promised statehood (within the Indian Union) to the region.

The successful economic blockade by the JCC and AJSU in the late 1980s increased the political legitimacy of the Jharkhandi political groups which resulted in the revival of their electoral fortunes. One feature which started emerging in this period was that a number of parties were gradually adopting Jharkhandi stances of supporting autonomy for the region.

Unsuccessful in the 1984 election, the JMM won three of the fourteen Lok Sabha seats in the region in 1989 (table 82). In

Table 82: Performance of political parties in Jharkhand in the 1989 Lok Sabha election

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Chatra	14	JD 49.6 U. N. Verma	INC 32.5 Y. P. Yogesh	IPF 7.8	IND 5.8	LKDB 1.3
Dhanbad	22	MCOR 38.8 A. K. Roy	BJP 36.6 S. Singh	INC 18.6	IND 0.9	IND 0.7
Dumka*	8	JMM 61.0 Shibu Soren	INC 34.0 Prithivi C. Kisku	IND 1.5	IND 0.7	DDP 0.7
Giridih	6	BJP 33.9 Ramdas Singh	IND 32.2 Binod B. Mahto	INC 27.6	JD 5.5	IND 0.5
Godda	11	BJP 54.2 Jagdambi Yadav	JMM 22.3 S. Mandal	INC 21.2	JPJP 0.5	IND 0.3
Hazaribagh	11	BJP 44.0 Y. Pandey	CPI 35.8 B. Mehto	INC 11.6	IPF 4.1	IND 2.1
Jamshedpur	13	JMM 27.1 S. Mahtoo	INC 25.4 C. Bagghi	BJP 23.0	CPI 22.0	JKD 0.8
Khunti	8	BJP 33.2 Karia Munda	JKD 32.0 N. E. Horo	INC 28.6	IND 2.3	DDP 1.4

Table 82 continued

Table 82 continued

Constituency	*Number of candidates*	*Winner party and per cent of votes polled*	*Runner-up party and per cent of votes polled*	*Third party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fourth party and per cent of votes polled*	*Fifth party and per cent of votes polled*
Kodarma	8	BJP 45.5 R. P. Verma	INC 26.4 T. P. Singh	JMM 20.7	IND 5.7	DDP 0.6
Lohardaga*	11	INC 40.2 Sumati Oraon	BJP 29.6 Lalit Oraon	JD 18.7	JMM 4.8	JKD 2.4
Palamu#	8	JD 37.3 J. Ram	BJP 28.6 Ramdeni Ram	INC 23.4	IPF 6.0	LKDB 2.1
Rajmahal*	7	JMM 58.1 S. Marandi	IND 21.7 J. Tudu	INC 17.1	IND 1.4	HJD 0.8
Ranchi	19	JD 35.2 S. K. Sahay	BJP 31.9 R. T. Chowdhary	INC 27.4	IND 1.0	JPJP 0.8
Singhbhum*	11	INC 30.6 Bagun Sumbrai	JD 23.4 M. S. Lamaye	JMM 23.0	IND 17.2	JKD 2.4

Source: Butler, Lahiri and Roy (1991) and various newspapers and magazines.
* ST constituency.
# SC constituency.

these seats, the JMM polled an average of 49 per cent of the votes. This represented an important turnaround in its fortunes. However, the Jharkhandi parties still did not figure amongst the first five candidates in seven of the fourteen constituencies. However, in the other seven constituencies, they polled an average of 31 per cent of the votes (compared with 12 per cent in 1984). Overall, they polled 16 per cent votes in the Jharkhand region (table 83).

Table 83: Performance of Jharkhandi political parties in the 1989 Lok Sabha election

Year	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in constituencies with electoral presence*	*Average votes polled by all Jharkhandi parties in all constituencies of Jharkhand*	*Average percentage of votes polled in seats won by Jharkhandi parties*	*Seats won in Jharkhand*
1989	31.11	15.55	48.73	3 out of 14

Apart from bringing the Jharkhandi parties back into the electoral reckoning, this election represents an important landmark in the relationship of resource dependence. It was noticed that in the 1950s and 1960s, the failure of the JHP to secure a separate state had gradually led to a decline in its electoral fortunes to an extent that it disappeared from the political map. The electorate found development issues to be more important than those of Jharkhandi identity and autonomy. Consequently, they tried to develop a meaningful relationship for exchange of resources with the State through the avenues offered by the various parties over the decades. However, having achieved only limited success, the electorate now felt that a faster and more efficient development initiative in the Jharkhand region was possible only within an autonomous state.

The development profile in the decade 1981–91 did not improve. The demographic balance altered during this decade to make politics on tribal lines even more difficult, since by 1991 only 28 per cent of the population of the Jharkhand region was of tribal origin (table 60). Literacy continued to represent the

successful component of public policy in Jharkhand. By 1991, more than 33 per cent of the population of the region was literate (table 62). This growth in literacy was matched by a growth in further education as well (chapter 5). Jharkhand continued to outperform Bihar as a whole on the literacy front.

There was a decline in employment in the Jharkhand region with just about 32 per cent of the population being employed in 1991 (compared to over 36 per cent in 1981). Between 1981 and 1991, the percentage of population depending on agriculture increased slightly (chart 5). Despite a rise in the number of persons employed in agricultural activities, there was a decline in the irrigation potential of Jharkhand during the past decade. This drop can also be noticed in the area of land irrigated by government canals (chart 9). The overall development profile of Jharkhand had declined over the past two decades.

This falling development profile contributed another component to the dynamics of resource dependence in the Jharkhand region. The policy planners in the early 1950s had hoped that a vigorous development policy would weaken the demand for autonomy on cultural lines. However, the poor implementation of the policy and the declining development profile had encouraged the electorate to demand an autonomous state precisely for the reason of a non-functional development policy under the existing arrangements. Under these circumstances, the issue of Jharkhandi identity was raised to augment the political resources controlled by the electorate. The fortunes of the Jharkhandi groups that stood for a separate state of Jharkhand reflected these dynamics.

The INC lost its legitimacy and the support which was generated by its pro-poor rhetoric and some concrete efforts at improving development. The population and the electorate of Jharkhand were willing to once again experiment with the various political parties that were present in the region, including the Jharkhandi political groups. The success of the BJP can also be explained partially by this analysis. The BJP exploited the slogan "सब को देखा बार बार, हमको देखो एक बार" [You (the electorate) have tried all parties time and again, try us once], to appeal to the electorate of the region that had been let down by all political groups in the region as far as their development requirements

were concerned. The BJP also started speaking of its own concept of Vananchal (forest state) to appeal to a cross section of the electorate in the region.

The interplay between political dynamics and changing electoral support for the Jharkhandi political groups reflects the exasperation of the voters with the political choices available to them. It also partly explains the trajectory of decline and resurgence of the support for the national as well as Jharkhandi political groups over the past half-century.

Three-pronged Approach

The failure of the political parties active in the Jharkhand region to offer avenues for the exchange of resources between the electorate and the State, and the consequent decline in the development profile added another dimension to the relationship of dependence in the region. In the nineties, the electorate split the political resources which they controlled into three components. As a result, the 1991 and 1996 elections showed that the state-level electoral support went to the Janata Dal, which was in office at the state level[16] and could, thus influence public policy implementation. In the Lok Sabha elections, however, BJP found political support in the Jharkhand region because it was the only national party that had promised (and later created) the state of Jharkhand.

The third component of the strategic use of political resources by the public at large consisted of avenues to force the two parties to remember their promises during the term of office. This was manifested in the support for the agitational politics (economic blockades, general strikes, and so on) of the JMM, the JCC and the AJSU. This kind of agitational politics forced the State to take cognisance of the Jharkhandi electorate, since these agitations often required the use of violence by the State in order to keep the mineral lifeline of the country running. Such violence undermined the legitimacy of the State and the regime. Consequently, the regime in office was forced to take urgent policy measures to contain future strife.

This three-pronged approach in the late 1980s and the 1990s yielded better profits for the people of the Jharkhand region.

Such strategic use of political resources led the State to engage in a more meaningful exchange of resources with the population of the Jharkhand region. As a result, a Committee on Jharkhand Matters (COJM) was appointed, and by 1995, Bihar Vidhan Sabha had legislated to create the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC). The strategic use of political resources by the electorate at the national level (in the form of political support for the BJP for the Lok Sabha elections), finally, led to the creation of the state of Jharkhand in 2000. The splitting of political resources at the command of the electorate thus forced the State to respond with better policy measures.

After the creation of the state in November 2000, the BJP became the single largest party in the newly constituted Vidhan Sabha.[17] It formed the government, headed by Chief Minister Babulal Marandi, with the support of its other National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners.[18] The Jharkhandi groups led by the JMM were quite vocal in their opposition to the swearing in of a BJP government in Jharkhand and lay claim to the government in light of their long struggle for the creation of the state. However, due to the politics of numbers, the JMM and other similar parties were forced to accept their role as the Opposition.

There are political tensions inherent in this arrangement. While the creation of the state of Jharkhand may have satisfied the demands of a Jharkhandi identity, development problems continue to fester, which will require vigorous policy measures on the part of the new state government. Further, the role of RJD in the new state of Jharkhand is undergoing a transformation, which will be determined by the electorate in future elections.[19] These factors will affect the way in which the electorate will share the political resources at its command in future elections. A new era of strategic use of political resources will be ushered in with the first election to the Jharkhand Vidhan Sabha and the next Lok Sabha election.

CHART 1: Growth of total and Scheduled Tribes population in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1951–91

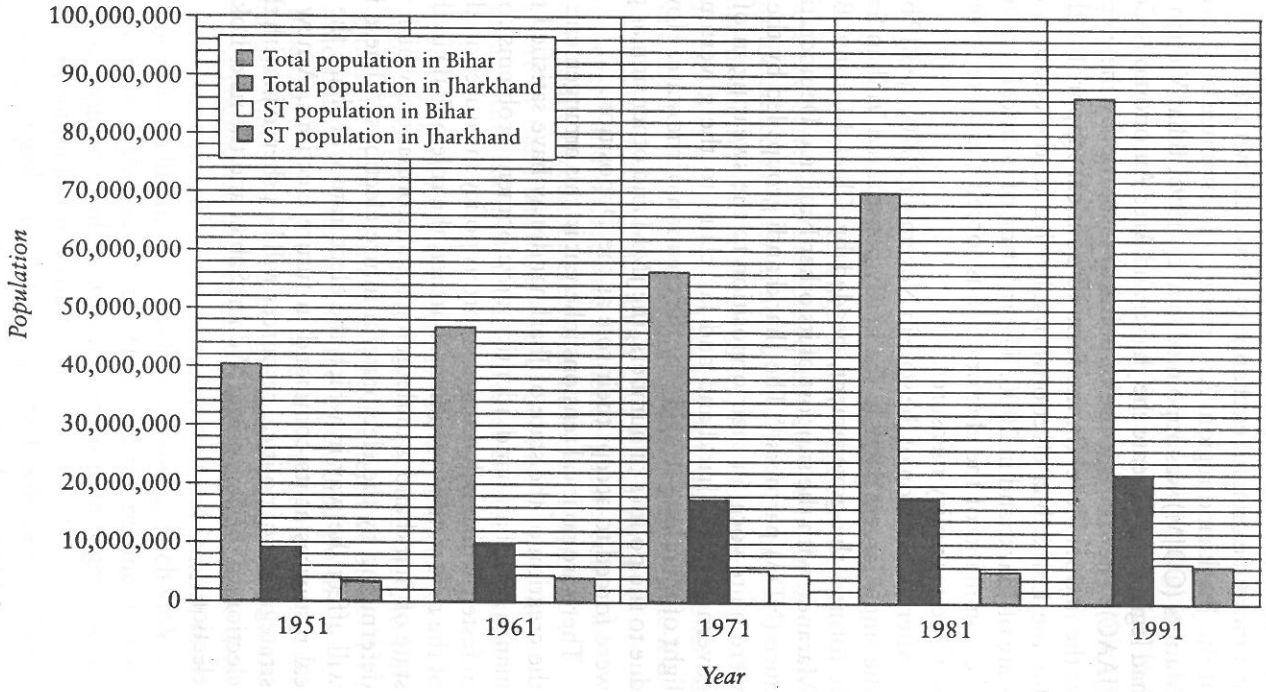


CHART 2: Total agricultural output of principal crops in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1949–50 to 1961–62

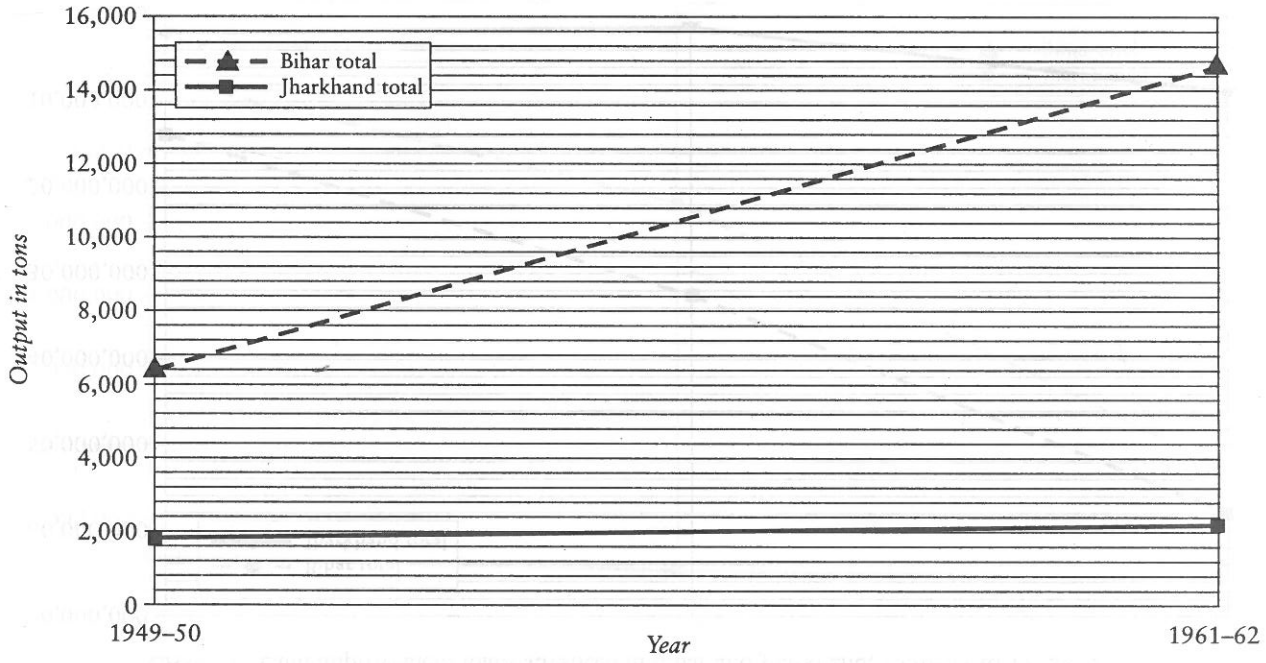


CHART 3: Land improvement loans advanced in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1950–51 to 1972–73

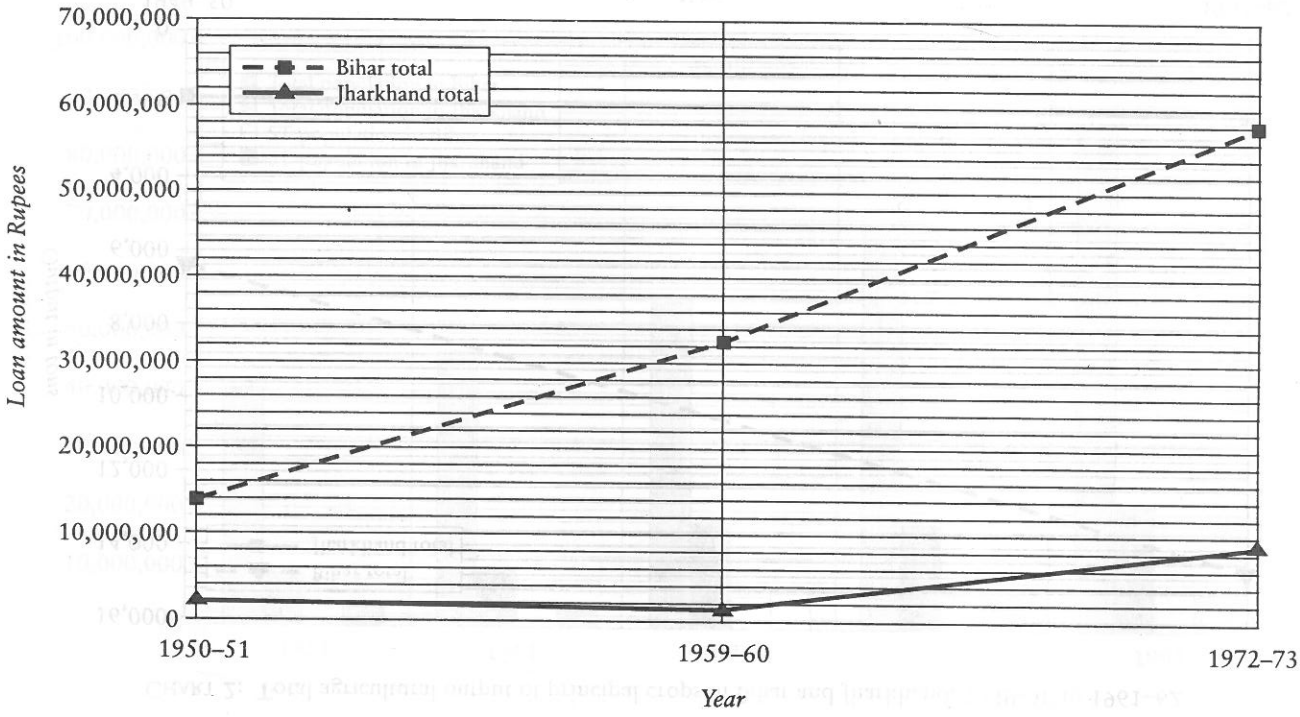


Chart 4: Collection of agricultural income tax in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1950–51 to 1975–76

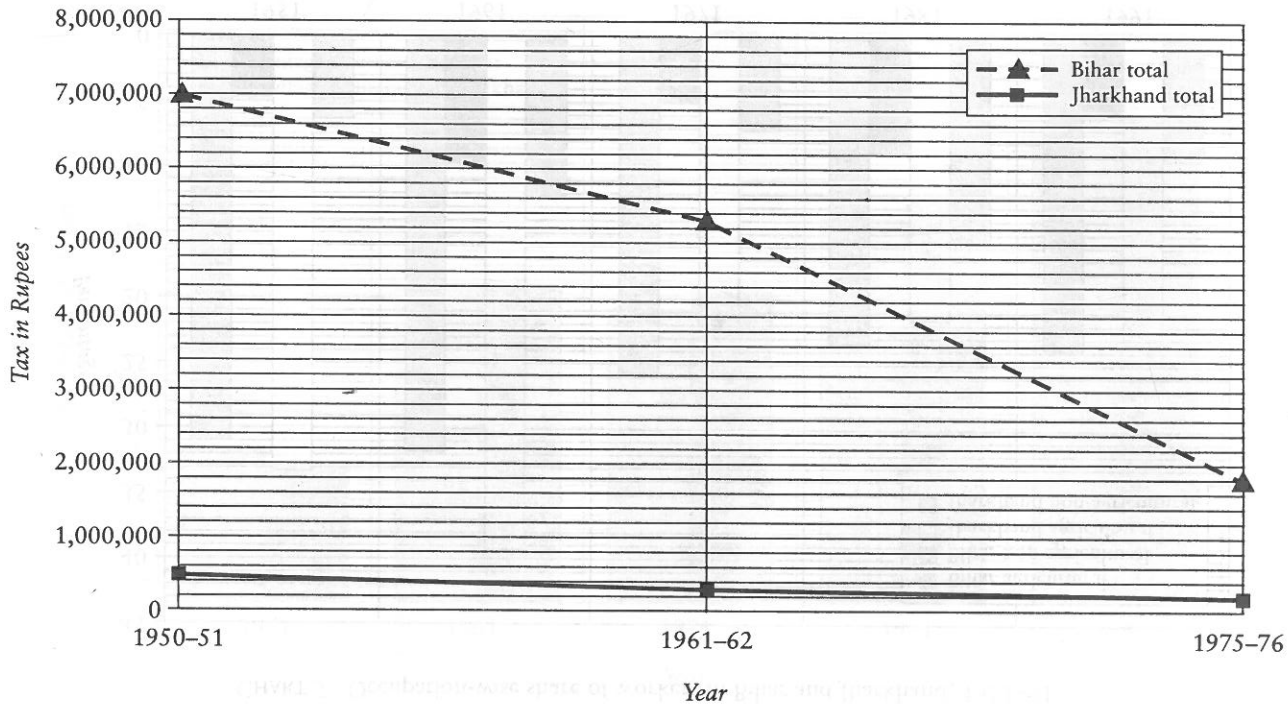


CHART 5: Occupation-wise share of workers in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1951–91

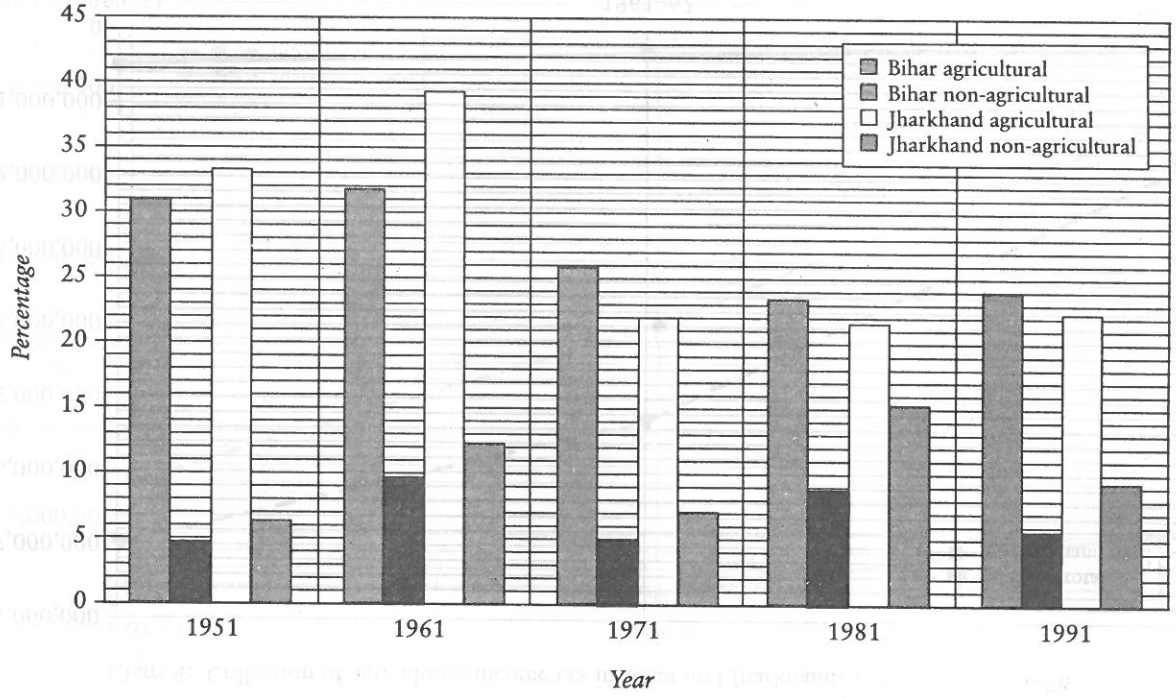


CHART 6: Growth of literacy in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1951–91

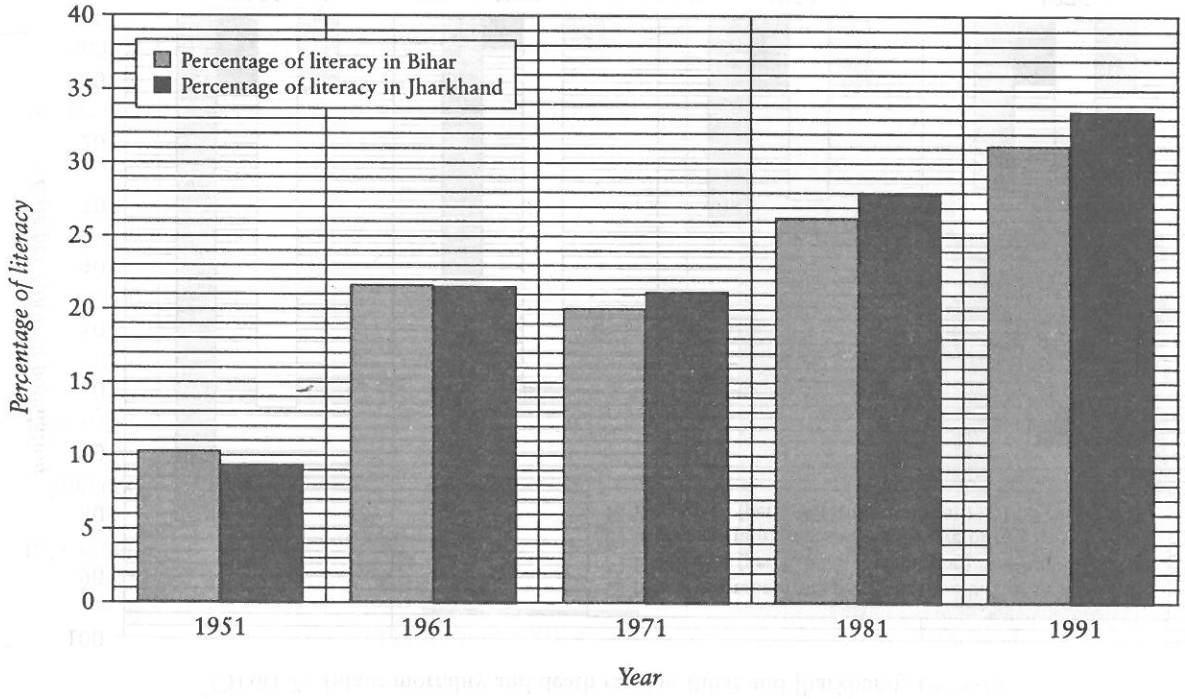


CHART 7: Infant mortality and death rates in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1950–75

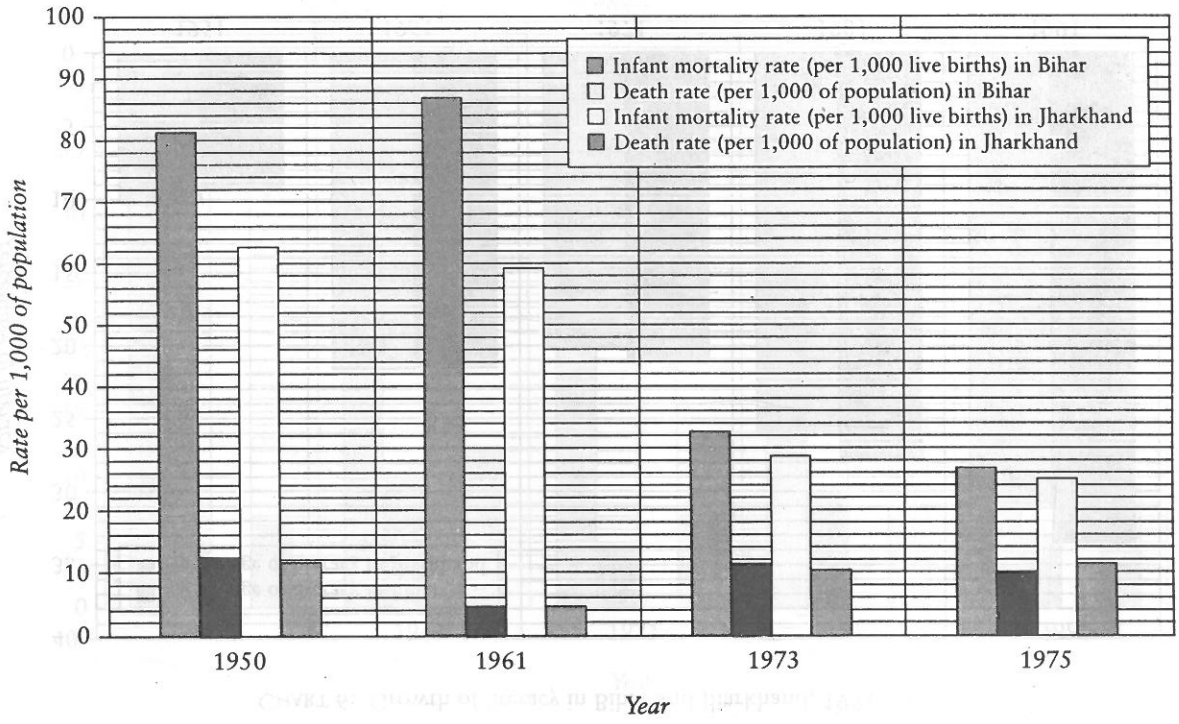


CHART 8: Electricity tax collected in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1950–51 and 1975–76

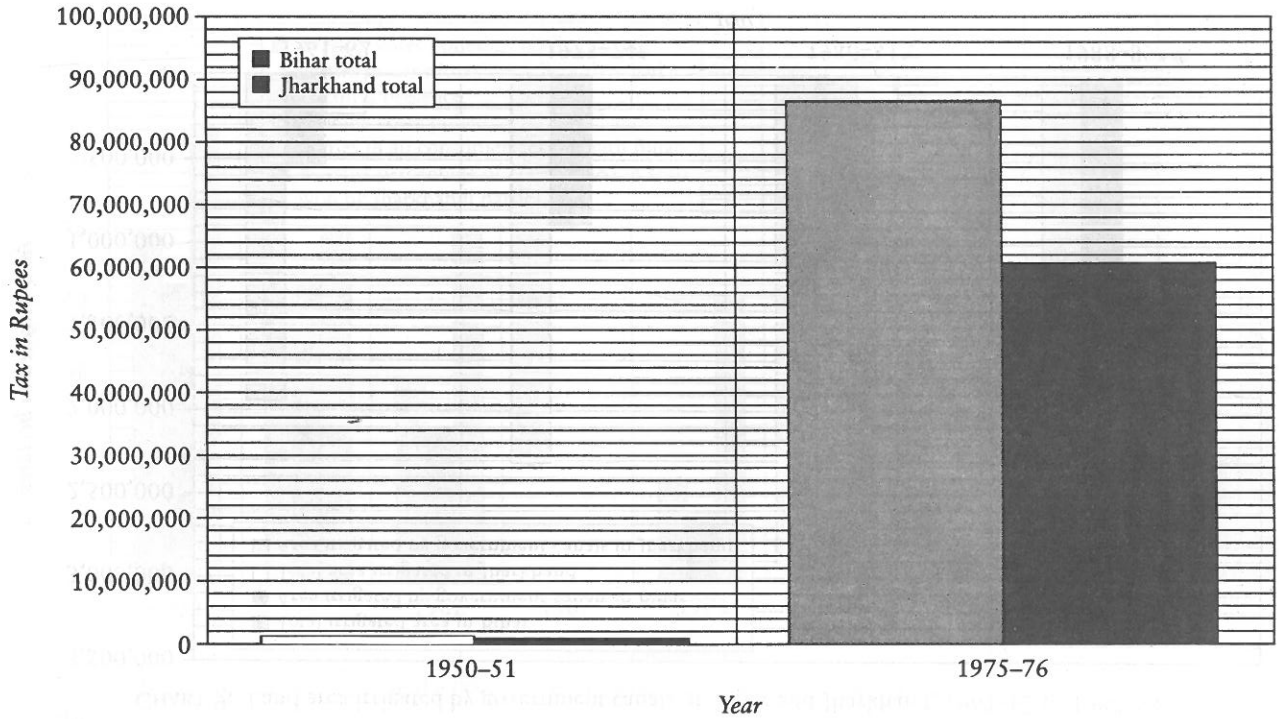
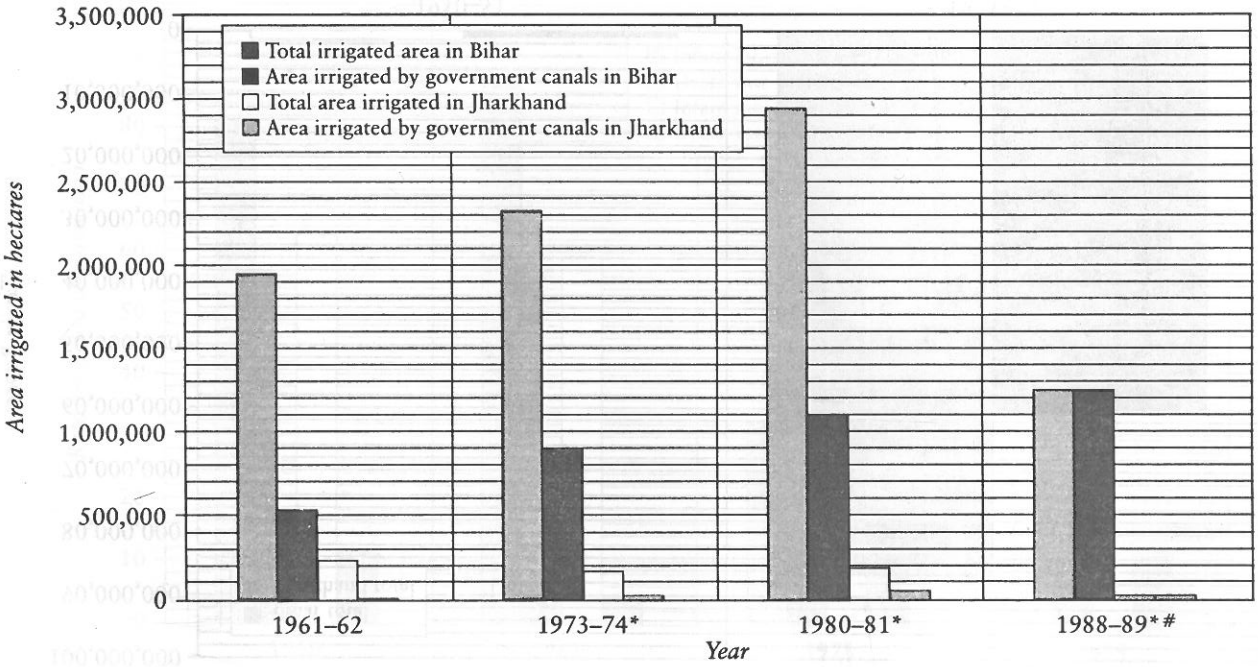
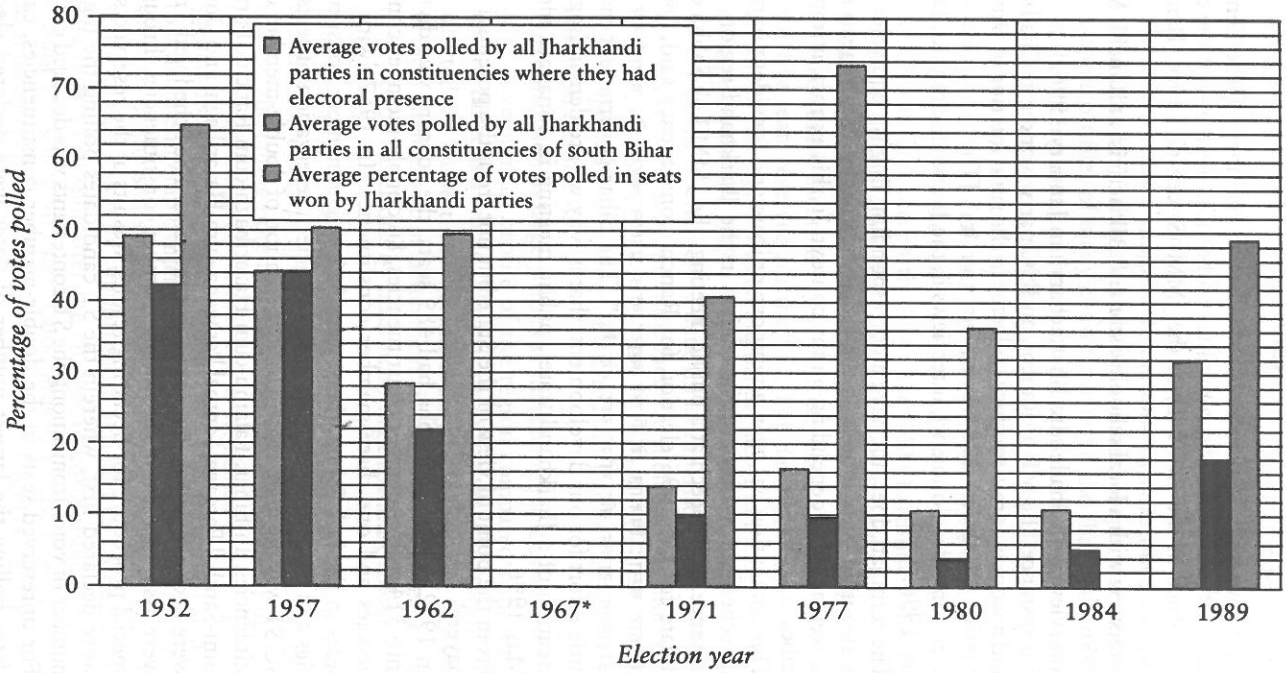


CHART 9: Land area irrigated by government canals in Bihar and Jharkhand, 1961–62 to 1988–89



* Rounded up to the nearest thousand in the source.
# Area irrigated by means other than government canals is not available.

CHART 10: Average votes polled by Jharkhandi parties in Jharkhand in Lok Sabha elections, 1952–89



* In the 1967 election, the JHP was a part of the INC. Hence, the performance of the Jharkhandi political formations in this election cannot be calculated.

Notes

1. Interview with Shailendra Bhattacharya, member of the central committee and working committee and officer in-charge of the central office of the JMM (S) at the JMM (S) central office, Ranchi, January 1996.
2. Interview with a local schoolmaster and BJP activist at Ranchi, May 1996.
3. Interview with Shailendra Bhattacharya in January 1996.
4. For instance, the MP of Ranchi, an INC party worker in Chaibasa, and a woman forest-produce collector in the rural interior of Dumka district, all agreed that "विकास तो हुआ है।" [There has definitely been some development], interviews in the Jharkhand region, January 1996.
5. The term jati does not have a corresponding English equivalent. It is also used quite loosely in the Indian languages. It can mean race as well as tribe, depending on the context. In this extract, it implies tribe.
6. This contention has been an important issue and is evident in most speeches and writings of the leaders in the Jharkhand region. For instance, in a speech at a public meeting, the JMM Lok Sabha candidate for the 1996 election for Ranchi constituency said, "बिहार सरकार हमारे विकास के लिये बहुत कम प्रयत्न करती है, इस लिये हम झारखण्ड राज्य की माँग कर रहे है।" [The Bihar government makes little effort for our development, that is why we are demanding the creation of a Jharkhand state], public meeting in Sonahatu block, May 1996.
7. From the point of view of the State but not from the potential taxpayers'.
8. In 1952, when Lok Sabha had 489 seats, the country was divided into 314 single-member constituencies, 86 double-member constituencies and one three-member constituency. In 1957, with 494 seats in the Lok Sabha, there were 312 single-member constituencies and 91 double-member constituencies. Reservation of seats for SC/ST was the main reason for the creation of double-member constituencies. In Bihar, Palamu-cum-Hazaribagh-cum-Ranchi, Purnea-cum-Santhal Pargana, Santhal Paragana-cum-Hazaribagh, and Dumka were declared double-member constituencies. The Scheduled Tribes were assured a seat in the double-member constituencies through a special procedure for declaring results. Results of the reserved seats were declared first, wherein the ST candidates polling the highest number of votes from among the ST contestants was declared elected. For unreserved seats in the double-member constituencies, candidates polling the largest number of votes were declared elected,

irrespective of their social affiliations. The electorate in these constituencies had two votes, and in the results of these two elections, both winners and runners-up were elected from such constituencies. For details, see Singh and Bose (1984: 13).

9. There were three major delimitations of constituencies between 1952 and 1977 that altered the number, shape, size and demographic profiles of many constituencies in the Jharkhand region.
10. In the interests of continuity of the text and for ease of reference, all charts have been included at the end of the chapter. The charts are based on data collated from tables 1–83 in chapters 4, 5 and 6.
11. The decline in the overall popularity of the Jharkhandi groups was essentially due to the loss of support of the non-tribal population of the region. This was partly due to the JHP's hard-line stance against outsiders (diku) after the 1956 SRC report (see chapter 3). The tribal support for JHP had also declined but was still sizeable as reflected in the fact that in the 1962 elections, the JHP won three of the five seats reserved for the STs. The deteriorating development profile of the region was an important factor in the decline of overall support for the JHP.
12. As explained in chapter 4, data for comparison with 1951 is not very accurate on account of the fact that such data was not collected in 1951. All that can be calculated is a rough estimate.
13. This is specially so in view of the redefinition of categories as discussed in chapter 4.
14. This conclusion is largely true for Jharkhand itself as well as the relative development profile of the region compared with the average for Bihar as a whole. The private initiatives which seem to have affected the modest improvements may have included factors such as individual effort at betterment of one's life chances as well as more concerted efforts by missionary organisations, voluntary agencies, and so on.
15. Such a drastic fall is due to a statistical artefact resulting from the redefinition of categories in 1961 and 1971 (see chapter 4). Nevertheless, the falling potential for growth in employment opportunities in the agricultural occupations as witnessed in other indicators such as declining irrigation potential and falling cropped area points to a decline in employment capacity of the Jharkhand region, irrespective of the statistical artefact. Surely, a declining agricultural sector cannot gainfully support more agricultural workers.
16. The Janata Dal split after the charges of corruption were levelled against the Chief Minister, Laloo Prasad Yadav. Consequently, he formed a new party called the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) that came into office in Bihar with Rabri Devi as the chief minister.

17. As per the provisions of Bihar Reorganisation Act 2000, the MPs elected to the Lok Sabha from the constituencies in the Jharkhand region are deemed to be duly elected representatives of Jharkhand from 15 November 2000. Similarly, the Act also provides that the MLAs elected to the Bihar Legislative Assembly from the assembly constituencies in the Jharkhand region would deem to have been duly elected to the new Legislative Assembly of Jharkhand and, thus, form the first Vidhan Sabha of the state.
18. The present BJP government in Jharkhand is supported by 33 BJP legislators (32 elected and one nominated to represent the Anglo-Indian community) along with 12 MLAs belonging to BJP's alliance partners in the NDA (Samata Party: 5; Janata Dal (United): 3; All Jharkhand Students Union supported United Gomantwadi Democratic Party (UGDP): 2; Jharkhand Vananchal Congress (JVC): 2) giving it a majority of 45 in the 81 member Vidhan Sabha (one seat is vacant). Kalyan Choudhuri, The day of Jharkhandi, *Frontline*, 17 (24), 25 November–08 December 2000, p. 32.
19. In contrast to the earlier declaration made by Laloo Prasad Yadav that the state of Jharkhand will be created over his dead body, once the state was created, he was compelled to find a role for the RJD in the new state. Consequently, he joined hands with the JMM in November 2000 (another example of Jharkhandi parties' fluidity wherein the JMM joined hands with its arch-rival and so-called 'exploiter' party to be able to form the first government in Jharkhand) and negotiated with other political parties on behalf of the JMM to forge a non-NDA alliance. However, these efforts did not bear fruit and the tally of this alliance at 36 (JMM: 12; INC: 11; RJD: 9; CPI: 3; and, MCC: 1) was short of a simple majority by 6 seats. Ibid., p. 33.

7

Demand for Autonomy in Jharkhand

The issue of administrative autonomy for the region of Jharkhand can be traced back to the British period. There were submissions before the Simon Commission which had pleaded for the creation of a new province in the Jharkhand region. However, the Commission did not advocate this course of action. Hence, although the province of Orissa was created under the constitutional reforms of 1935, the practice of exclusion of parts of the region of Jharkhand from normal administration was continued. This was seen by the colonial administration as a paternalistic alternative to a separate province (see chapter 2).

After Independence, the issue of autonomy surfaced once again. Jaipal Singh and the JHP continued to persuade various official forums about the need to create a state of Jharkhand premised on the tribal way of life and its separate heritage and culture. These efforts did not meet with any noticeable success until the 1990s when the question of a separate administrative structure for the region was taken seriously and the JAAC was created, followed by the creation of the state of Jharkhand in November 2000.

The Premises and Construction of the Jharkhandi Identity

Until recently, the Jharkhandi identity was premised on the uniqueness and separateness of the tribal population of south Bihar. Writers on the subject went to great lengths to trace the origin of the separate political existence of the Jharkhand region. The leaders of the movement sought to invoke the past political entity (real or imagined) so as to forge a politically significant modern identity. They argued that Jharkhand, with its unique tribal heritage and culture, had been an autonomous political actor in the past and, hence, should be created an autonomous state under the present system. The Jharkhandi leaders isolated relevant his-

torical incidents and symbols to forge and sustain an identity. It may be commented that this exercise (like all similar ventures) verged on the creation and correction of history.

A good example of this exercise can be seen in an article by a respected tribal figure, Bhagwat Murmu, a recipient of the Padma Shri award. In this article, Murmu (1992: 37–47) attempts to delineate the reasons for the growth of the Jharkhand movement and explores possible solutions. To begin with, he briefly points out that 'Jharkhand' was an old term which was mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abul Fazl during the rule of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (Ibid.: 37). He does not dwell on this point for long, but the effort at historical legitimisation of the movement and identity is clear. The underlying point of this exercise is to examine the possible existence of the political entity of Jharkhand in the region, during Mughal rule.

Murmu goes on to emphasise that the tribes despite being underdeveloped, lead peaceable and simple lives and are self-sufficient in their tribal way of life. He interprets the tribal way of life in traditional as well as modern terms:

> इन आदिम जातियों में भाषा और रश्म (*sic*) रिवाजों में विभिन्नताएं हैं। शैक्षणिक और आर्थिक स्तर कुछ को छोड़ कर कमोबेश समान है... जातियां शान्तिप्रिय हैं और इनका जीवन मुख्यतः कृषि पर आधारित है। अपनी सामाजिक परम्परा, भाषा और रश्म (*sic*) रिवाज़ के प्रति इनकी अटूट श्रद्धा है और इसकी सुरक्षा के लिये बड़ी से बड़ी कुर्बानियां देने के लिये सदैव तत्पर रहते हैं। ... यह आक्रमक जातियां कभी नहीं रही हैं। ... इनका सामाजिक संगठन विशुद्ध गणतंत्र पद्धति पर आधारित है तथा अत्यन्त मज़बूत रहा है और वह अभी भी सम्पूर्ण समाज को एक सूत्र में बांधे हुए है। (Murmu 1992: 37)

> [These aboriginal jatis[1] differ on the lines of language and traditions and customs. Educationally and economically, with a few exceptions, they are largely, similar.... These jatis are peace loving and depend primarily on agriculture for their living. They have deep respect for their social traditions, language and customs and are ready for the greatest sacrifices to protect them.... These have never been aggressive jatis.... their social organisation is based on purely republican system and has been extremely strong. It is still able to keep the entire society united.]

On the one hand, the social autonomy of the tribals and their respect for their traditions and customs are emphasised. On the

other hand, their 'modernity' is exalted by dwelling on the "republican" aspects of their social systems. The subtext seems to be based on a dichotomy of 'we' versus 'them'. The fact that Murmu thinks that the ancient social system of the tribal population of Bihar is inherently democratic points to the discourse: 'we' had developed a form of social organisation centuries before 'them'. Hence, it is imperative that 'we' must be given the right to rejuvenate that social organisation by means of administrative autonomy. He also seems to be implying that that the 'tribal democratic life' was born out of an inherent democratic element in the social system (as opposed to political democracy) and, hence, was more stable.

The extract also dwells on the construction of a typical tribe. It emphasises the point that tribal people are peaceful and simple and have few needs. Consequently, they are open to exploitation by the 'others'. Besides, this image is construed by Murmu to justify the need for administrative autonomy. Such an image of an independent and exclusive tribal society has been the basis of the Jharkhand movement for a long time.

Simultaneously, however, since the movement requires the political support of the non-tribal populace, the existence of a long-standing social intercourse between the tribes and the 'others' is also emphasised by Murmu:

> प्राचीन काल से ही संताल [संथाल] समाज, अपने गाँव में अन्य पेशेवर जातियों को स्थान देता रहा है। ... ये बिल्कुल अलग एकांकी जीवन बिताने वाली जाति कभी नहीं रही है। (Murmu 1992: 39)

> [Since the ancient times the Santhal society has offered a place in their villages to the [non-tribal] functional/occupational jatis.... these jatis have never been ones to spend their lives in total isolation.]

To this end, Murmu partially contradicts the claim he makes earlier about the uniqueness of the tribal society, when he emphasises the similarities between the tribals and other people:

> भाषा एवं रश्म (*sic*) रिवाजों में अन्य जातियों के साथ इनकी जो एकता है, उसे बढ़ावा न देकर दरकिनार रखा गया अथवा नज़र अन्दाज़ किया गया। ... वास्तव में इस दृष्टि से देखा जाए तो इनकी भाषा और रश्म (*sic*) रिवाजों में अन्य जातियों के साथ एकता के ही तत्व अधिक है। (Ibid.)

[The similarities between the culture and traditions of the tribal jatis with other jatis have not been encouraged but have either been ignored or brushed aside. . . . In fact, as far as this point of view is concerned, there are more elements of similarities between their customs and traditions and those of other jatis.]

Thus, there is a very curious mix of arguments in Murmu's writing. On the one hand, an effort is made to convince the people that the tribal population and their development needs ought to be recognised as different from the rest of the population. On the other hand, it is also stressed that the tribals of the Jharkhand region have been engaged in social and economic intercourse with the rest of the population for centuries, and consequently, their customs and traditions are indistinguishable from the rest of the people. The Jharkhand movement has, thus, relied on multiple bases of political mobilisation which has led to ideological fluidity and opportunistic political stances of the leadership.

Murmu also criticises the opportunism of the leaders of the Jharkhand movement, their inability to put forward a creative agenda before the Jharkhandi population and the absence of any ideals or principles in the movement:

झारखण्ड आन्दोलन किसी सिद्धान्त या आर्दश पर आधारित आन्दोलन कभी नही रहा। इसका कोई भी नेता संघर्ष की अग्नि परीक्षा में से कभी नही गुजरा, फलस्वरुप शक्ति और सुविधा प्राप्ति के प्रलोभन के अवसर आने पर वे आसानी से अपने पथ से विचलित हो गए। इस आन्दोलन ने ठोस रुप से आदिवासी समाज के सामने कोई रचनात्मक कार्यक्रम प्रस्तुत नही किया, यह बराबर जनता [की] क्षणिक उत्तेजना और प्रलोभन की लहरों के साथ उठता और मन्द पड़ता रहा। (Murmu 1992: 40–1)

[The Jharkhand movement has never been a movement based on any principle or ideal. None of its leaders have passed through the tests of struggle, and consequently, whenever a temptation of acquiring power and comfort arises, they have easily deviated from their goals. This movement has never put forward a constructive programme in a concrete form before the adivasi society, this movement has been rising and falling on the waves of momentary excitement and temptation of the public]

Murmu goes further and attacks the perceptual shallowness and divisiveness in the movement. However, he does try to relate the unrest in the region to its development problems:

यह निश्चित है कि झारखण्ड आन्दोलन को आदिवासी समाज की आर्थिक समस्याओं और इनके पिछड़ेपन तथा अशिक्षा से जीवन शक्ति प्राप्त होती है। अगर इन समस्याओं को कुछ अंश तक भी हल कर दिया जाए तथा हल करने का प्रयास भी ईमानदारी से किया जाए तो आन्दोलन के पैर तले के (*sic*) धरती स्वतः खिसक जाएगी। खनीज (*sic*) सम्पदा की प्रचुरता के होते हुए भी यहां दरिद्रता का साम्राज्य है। . . . लोग परिश्रमी है, काम चाहते है, लेकिन वह उन्हे मिलता नही। आजादी के 45 साल बाद भी इनकी जमीन की समस्या हल नही हुई और जो जमीन इनके पास है उसमे न पानी ही पहुच पाया। (Murmu 1992: 41)

[It is certain that the Jharkhand movement finds its strength from the economic problems of the adivasi society and their backwardness and illiteracy. If a fraction of these problems is solved or even an honest effort is made to solve these problems, then the very ground under the feet of the movement will slip away on its own. Despite the abundance of the minerals, poverty reigns. . . . People are hard-working, they want work but it is not available to them. Even after 45 years of independence, their problems of land have not been solved and irrigation facilities have not reached the land that is held by them.]

The foregoing analysis of the movement by a respected Jharkhandi figure all but sums up the premises of the movement. Almost all the published works have expressed similar points of view. The various writers, many of whom are also important political figures, have emphasised the tribal basis of the movement in terms of the culture and heritage of the region. In this aspect of their argument, they have attempted to historically legitimise the movement, drawing upon the agrarian revolts of the nineteenth century to emphasise a tradition of protest against exploitation.

Although not many parallels can be drawn between the tribal revolts of the colonial period and the present-day movement, the political and intellectual figures active in the movement tried to create and sustain a politically significant ethnic identity with the help of such historical legitimisation. However, they realised that the basis of the movement could not be merely harking back to a bygone era of tribal abundance. Consequently, the leaders were quick to point to the development aspects and invariably ended up pointing to the region's poor development profile to add to the legitimacy of the movement. Moreover, they realised that the movement was likely to find more support if it could be related

to the contemporary problems faced by the general population of the region instead of merely depending on tribal uniqueness.

This approach of relating recent disturbances and demand-making by the politically active groups in Jharkhand to the poor development profile had a two-fold effect. It provided an opportunity to the government to officially translate the ethnic character of the movement into one premised on 'development-deficits' in the region. Such a formulation by the government about the nature of the movement—that the Jharkhand movement was essentially a protest against poor implementation of development policy in the region—gave the leaders an avenue by which to legitimise their demands. This, in turn, was taken up by the government to minimise the implications of the demand for administrative and political autonomy.

Consideration of the Demands for Autonomy

States Reorganisation Commission

As has been noted, the demand for the creation of a separate state of Jharkhand predates Independence (chapter 2). After Independence, a sizeable amount of political energy was invested in demanding the creation of separate states all over India. Although some amount of deliberation had gone into the principles and practices behind the organisation of the states in 1948 (when the integration of the numerous princely states was being considered), the first large-scale review was undertaken in the years 1953–55. The States Reorganisation Commission dealt with the issue comprehensively and reported against the creation of a state in the Jharkhand region. It recommended creation of new states on linguistic lines only, rather than on principles such as tribal cultural identities.[2] On the linguistic criterion, Jharkhand had not qualified for a new state.[3]

The SRC acknowledged the good performance of the Jharkhand Party in the 1952 election, but noted that it had not secured an absolute majority in the region. It also pointed out that with the exception of the Jharkhand Party, no other political party in the region was in favour of the creation of a Jharkhand state (*Report, States Reorganisation Commission* 1955: 617–8). The Commission also took note of the fact that the tribal population in the region was only a third of the total population and was divided into several linguistic groups. Therefore, it opined that "even if it is assumed that Adivasis are solidly in favour of the formation of a Jharkhand State, a major issue of this kind cannot, in our opinion, be decided on the basis of the views of the minority. There seems to be no warrant, however, for the assumption that even Adivasi opinion can be considered to be unanimous on this point" (Ibid: 618).

Furthermore, the SRC pointed out that the creation of the state of Jharkhand would affect the "entire economy of the existing state." It noted: "the plains are predominantly agricultural and Chota Nagpur plateau provides an industrial balance.... The residual area can hardly afford to lose the benefits derived from this situation.... [It] will upset the balance between agriculture and industry in the residual State which will be a poorer area with fewer opportunity and resources for development." (*Report, States Reorganisation Commission* 1955: 619–20). The Commission found no deficiency in the development profile of the Jharkhand region and saw south Bihar as an industrial complement to the agricultural north Bihar.

The goal of this Commission was to recommend the reorganisation of states with a view to satisfying regional aspirations, but at the same time administrative convenience was also taken into account. The Commission did not see any grounds for a separate administrative set-up for the tribal population in south Bihar, as they were a numerical minority in the region. Besides, it also pointed out that the goal of administration and development programme was economic and political advancement of the whole population. Therefore, it was generally satisfied with the existing administrative arrangements in the region.

Clearly, as far as the SRC was concerned, there was no problem with the development profile of the region. As has emerged in chapter 4, the relative development profile of the Jharkhand region was better than that of Bihar as a whole in the 1950s. It was only from the 1960s onward (despite the progress of the five year plans) that the relative development profile of the region deteriorated or did not advance at the same rate as of Bihar as a whole.

The linking of the demand for a separate state of Jharkhand to development issues had, however, started. The SRC observed that it had been "suggested that Chota Nagpur is bound to benefit from the separation, because it has been neglected so far by the Bihar Government [but] . . . there is little evidence, on the whole, of lop-sided economic development" (*Report, States Reorganisation Commission* 1955: 621).

This view of the SRC indicates that the government had started interpreting the problems thrown up by the articulation of identities in terms of development imbalances. This seems to be true of most such movements in India where the governmental response has been to pump in more development funds instead of trying to deal with the socio-political roots of the problems. Besides, it was the Jharkhandi leaders, such as Jaipal Singh, who had first started emphasising the development problems of the region (real or perceived), as seen in the Constitutional Assembly debates (see chapter 2). In the political climate of the 1950s, with high expectations from the independent Indian state and nationalistic euphoria running high, the Jharkhandi leaders used the arguments of poor development avenues in the Jharkhand region and exploitation by Bihar to legitimise their demand for a separate state. The demographic heterogeneity and absence of linguistic contiguity in the region rendered the arguments used by other linguistic groups (Telugus, Kannadigas, Oriyas and others) useless, in the region. Therefore, the development argument would have been seen as secular and functional enough to be put forward as the basis of a new state. Thus, the issue of development became inextricably linked to the Jharkhandi identity.

The analysis in the previous chapters has shown that at the start of the 1950s decade, the development profile of the region of Jharkhand was better than Bihar as a whole, but gradually deteriorated over the years. It soon reached a point when the growth of development opportunities in the region became stagnant at best and negative at worst. Therefore, with the passing years, the issue of poor performance of the public-policy delivery mechanism further entrenched the links between the issue of a separate state, the Jharkhandi identity, and the development issues.

Sarkaria Commission

Apart from the States Reorganisation Commission, the Commission on Centre-State Relations chaired by Justice R. S. Sarkaria (set up in the early eighties) carried out the only other large-scale official review into the issue of state autonomy and other related issues. The Commission reported in 1987. Although the terms of reference of the Commission did not include the prospect of creation of new states, the Commission's report is valuable in terms of what the respondents to its questionnaire had to say about the equilibrium between the states and the Centre, and their perception about the linkages between the issue of state autonomy and socio-economic development.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha was the only registered party in south Bihar region at the time when the Commission was eliciting the views of the major regional political actors. While responding to the questionnaire, the JMM continued the discourse of linking regional imbalances created by development initiatives to the demands for administrative autonomy. Addressing the question whether the JMM was in favour of greater decentralisation of powers, it responded that it was in favour of such an action "but the decentralisation should not itself be between centre and state, but also between district and districts considering the heterogeneity [,] uneven development and multicultural character of the state itself with specific mention of the hilly and tribal areas of Bihar now existing [as] a[n] internal colony of both the State and Centre" (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 1.3). The practice of emphasising development imbalances as a basis for the demand of autonomy, which had been quite important since Independence, had by the late eighties become predominant.

The questionnaire also asked whether the respondents knew of the existence of any federation where national and regional governments were co-ordinate and absolutely independent within their respective constitutional jurisdictions. To which, the JMM responded that they believed that such a set-up existed in the USSR (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 1.4). They seemed to be pointing to the nationality-based political set-up in the erstwhile USSR. From this it may be deduced that the JMM

was not ready to give up the cultural and tribal identity based articulation of the Jharkhandi identity. The general tone of its response to the Sarkaria Commission questionnaire shows that the JMM saw the issue of administrative autonomy for Jharkhand as akin to the nationality question in the erstwhile USSR. Thus, the effort at combining the cultural and development premises of the demand of a separate state of Jharkhand had come full circle. The JMM was by now able to combine both these premises in its discourse. It hoped that such a practice would fulfil its purpose of generating political support in both the tribal and the non-tribal sections of the population of the region. At the same time, it was assumed that the underpinning of the demand for political autonomy with cultural aspects would also give the movement a sense of identity which would not only differentiate it from other demands for administrative decentralisation but also make it a relatively more potent political force.

Another response by the JMM to the Sarkaria Commission questionnaire critised the model of development adopted in India, which according to it lay at the root of underdevelopment in Jharkhand. The JMM thus emphasised the relationship between underdevelopment and the lack of administrative autonomy. It commented that "major difficulties would not be removed . . . as they are ingrained in this post colonial social structure and its ill advised capitalist mode of development vitiating the very motivation of the society, with suspicion and acquisitiveness" (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 1.5).

The JMM further amplified this point with the comment that although the independence and unity of the country has paramount importance, "[the] constitution has failed in the purpose as all the provisions of the directive principle of the States (*sic*) have been violated or rendered dead letter" (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 1.6). This statement is valuable since it was the JMM's response to the question whether the unity and independence of India was of paramount importance. Clearly, the JMM saw the implementation of development aspirations as enshrined in the Directive Principles of State Policy (Articles 36–51 of the Constitution), the best possible avenue of maintaining the independence and unity of India. The JMM appears to have implied that these provisions of the Constitution had been vio-

lated or rendered useless, and therefore, there was a case for a redefinition of the structures of the state and the creation of the state of Jharkhand. Thus, the JMM leadership advocated a reorganisation of the administrative structures in India based on the development aspiration enshrined in the section on Directive Principles of State Policy. Furthermore, in response to the question whether it supported the power of the Parliament to alter the states in any respect it deemed fit (Article 3), the JMM replied:

> We support the power under Article 3 but . . . this has not been properly utilised for political consideration of the dominating section to ensure development of culture, language, identity of the oppressed nationalities as that residing in the area called Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Uttarakhand and others in the country creating tensions between nationalities. A provision should be made in Article 3 to review with statutory commissions . . . to form any more states in the country, to ensure proper development". (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 1.8)

This is another good example of the balance which the Jharkhandi leaders had been able to create between their demand for autonomy based on the 'nationalistic' aspirations of the people of the Jharkhand region and their need for development, despite the fact that they also criticised the model of development and poor implementation of that model. It seems that the JMM leadership was arguing that the State's model of development had failed due to its inability to respond to the needs of a Jharkhandi society that is a politically self-conscious identity. Therefore, according to the JMM leadership, there was an urgent need to grant autonomy to the Jharkhand region. Such an act would not only bring about faster development (since the development initiative would then be based on a model that is suitable to the socio-economic peculiarities of the region), but would also help in realising the legitimate political aspirations of the region. This would, in turn, ensure a stronger commitment to the unity and independence of the country.

This model of development that the JMM seemed to have been proposing was based on an increasing degree of decentralisation of power. It is noteworthy that the JMM wanted the power of the Union government to be restricted to defence, communications,

currency, foreign affairs, interstate relations and creation of new states. They also did not deem it fit for Parliament to have any power to legislate in the national interest on subjects on the state list (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 2.2 and 2.3). However, despite criticism that the All India Services undermined the autonomy of the states, the JMM was in favour of more All India Services with the proviso that IAS officers must be posted outside their native states (: 4.8). Interestingly, they had nothing to say about the undermining of the states' autonomy by the Central technical agencies which, it was alleged, had become a parallel government in some states. This indicates that the JMM sought autonomy from the Bihar government and not the Central government.

Further, the JMM's responses to the section on financial arrangements in the Sarkaria Commission questionnaire were rather shallow and often incompatible with each other. Most of their responses in this section were general in nature. According to them, "mismanagement, corruption, lack of planning and political will of the states run by political party which is also running the centre" were the prime cause of growing indebtedness of the states (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 5.17).

The JMM sought to reduce the role of the Central government in the development administration in the states and demanded a total separation between the fiscal arrangements of the states and the Centre. Besides, they were of the considered view that the regional imbalances born out of public policy implementation could be ameliorated only by "clear cut division of resources of the States enforced by the centre for its different regions with particular instances to the backward regions" (Response of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha 1987: 5.3). It wanted the Centre and the Planning Commission to suggest to the states, ways and means of developing their resources despite an earlier expressed wish that the states must be left alone to chalk out their own plans and implement them. On the other questions, the JMM suggested further consideration by a parliamentary committee or pointed to the need to strengthen certain sections of the administration. Overall, except for the first few questions, the responses of the JMM to the questionnaire indicate a state of confusion and lack of comprehensive understanding of the issues involved. They

were quite clear and eloquent when answering questions about the relationship between identity, development and the Directive Principles, but as far as the details of administration were concerned, they failed to put forth coherent and original alternatives.

Committee on Jharkhand Matters

The Jharkhandi demand for autonomy has also been considered in some other forums since Independence. This process of deliberations provided an opportunity for mutual sharing of resources between the State and the Jharkhandi political groups. An important document in this process of sharing of an information resource[4] by both the State and the Jharkhandi political groups is the Report of the Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990 (COJM). This Committee was constituted by the Union ministry of home affairs in an attempt to find a solution to the issue. It comprised all the major political figures of the Jharkhand movement, irrespective of their official party affiliation.[5] The joint secretaries to the ministries of rural development, tribal development and home affairs represented the Central government, while the government of Bihar was represented by the secretaries in the ministries of home affairs and tribal welfare, and the regional development commissioner of the Jharkhand region. There were many other experts ranging from anthropologists to social activists who served on the COJM.

The COJM report defined the Jharkhand movement in terms of development problems. It noted that

> apart from its other dimensions, *basically, it is a socio-economic problem and that it has arisen as a response to the exploitation of the indigenous people inhabiting the Jharkhand region*. Specifically, for the scheduled tribes people, measures have been undertaken by the Government of Bihar and the Central Government to *effect improvement in their socio-economic conditions and to combat exploitation.... Notwithstanding these and various other steps taken, it would appear that the discontent of the people of the region has not only continued to simmer, but has also shown a tendency to rise*. The demand for a separate state of Jharkhand falls into that pattern (emphasis added). (Report, Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990: I.2)

The report also examined the process of conversion of the Jharkhand movement premised on ethnic factors into one that is

primarily premised on the relative underdevelopment of the region. It regarded the movement as originating from the tribal ethnic characteristics but which gradually lost its tribal-heritage character and became merely an avenue for political action to demand better public policy delivery in the region. It pointed out that

> even though when Jharkhand movement as an ethnic movement has not been able to recapture its peak of electoral performance reached in the 1950s, the issues articulated by it centering on regional autonomy as a remedy against underdevelopment and inequality have been largely accepted by almost all parties and political forces in the region. . . . MLAs and MPs . . . have repeatedly emphasised the need for autonomy and development. Wherever the Committee went, the Congressmen equally complained of neglect and underdevelopment of the region, even though they did not support separation. The Bharatiya Janata Party has supported the formation of Vananchal [the BJP's version of a Jharkhand state[6]] comprising of (*sic*) 12 districts of Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur. The CPI has favoured the formation of a separate state out of the Scheduled Areas of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana. The Lok Dal has supported the idea of carving out smaller states. A poll recently taken . . . has suggested the presence of sizeable support for autonomy amongst many sections of the population. We believe the reasons for this support arises from a widespread feeling of alienation among a large section of people of Chotanagpur, both tribal and non-tribal from the rest of Bihar. (Report, Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990: III.19)

The Committee thus felt that there was a political consensus about regional autonomy in the Jharkhand region due to widespread neglect of the region in development terms. It did not, however, recognise the significant ethnic tribal components in the movement. It felt that the ethnic component was at its height in the 1950s and had since run out of steam. Thus, there appeared to be a political consensus that the Jharkhand movement was a product of inefficiencies in the public-policy delivery mechanism and the consequent underdevelopment, and that the issue of an ethnic identity was not of primary importance.

The gradual decline of the ethnic component of the movement was further emphasised by the COJM by stressing its regional aspect:

> in the early phases of the autonomy movement in Chotanagpur, the lead was given by the tribal people. They were also good reasons for it.

> They were more literate and articulate. They were also more conscious. They had primarily led uprising and movements in 19th century. Agrarian laws were enacted to confer special benefits on them. In the early years of the Adivasi Mahasabha and Jharkhand movement, in spite of the fact that some non-tribals joined them, the non-tribals as a whole kept out of such movements. The reason for this lies in the colonial policy of separatism. The missionaries and the colonial officers treated the tribes and non-tribes as two separate categories. The hang-over of this policy persisted even after Independence for many years, even though the operation of market forces and of economy in general and the surfacing of underlying cultural processes tended to mitigate such dichotomous perceptions. . . . the distinction between the two categories became blurred and their perceptions of regional problems converged as both became victims of progress. A sense of neglect gripped them. Therefore, from the beginning of 1960s, the tribes and non-tribes started interacting more closely within the framework of the movements for autonomy and separation. In the process, they invoked cultural symbols and created myths and legends to provide cultural underlining of political movement. . . . The movement is still dominated by major tribal groups . . . but others have also joined hands. (Report, Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990: III.21, 24)

Such underplaying of the tribal heritage aspects of the movement and highlighting of the regional aspect became the predominant character of the Jharkhand movement. The points of view expressed by the report can be taken as the articulation of the Jharkhandi groups as well, since all major political and social organisations of the region were represented in the COJM. These Jharkhandi leaders did not contest any major point of the COJM report with the exception of the proposals for the new administrative arrangements, and hence, this definition of the nature and character of the movement became the dominant point of view across the political spectrum.

The cultural traits of the movement were further undermined when the COJM expressed its view that over "the last forty years there has crystallized the concept of Jharkhand region . . . with a distinct identity, language, form, cultural traits, elements of material culture and historical development". The committee recommended the creation of a cultural development authority, with possible autonomous powers, for the overall cultural develop-

ment of the region, the introduction of tribal languages in school syllabi, and the development of a composite culture (Report, Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990: III.30). This cultural development authority suggested by the COJM, if operationalised, would have probably meant an institution akin to the existing national cultural academies. Thus, while the COJM found it salient to preserve and promote the cultural uniqueness of the region, it did not consider this uniqueness to be a pertinent premise for the creation of an autonomous state in the Jharkhand region.

Hence, against the views of the Jharkhandi representation in the Committee, the COJM report did not recommend the creation of a separate state in the Jharkhand region. Consequently, in a supplementary note,[7] most of the major leaders of the region emphasised the need to create such a unit. Their major point of difference with the report of the COJM was the nature of the proposed administrative arrangements. After a brief paragraph on the cultural uniqueness of the region, the note of dissent swiftly went on to differ from the COJM on the ground that the experience of the past four decades had proved that adequate development of Jharkhand region was not possible within Bihar. Hence, a clear relationship emerged between the failure of the policy-delivery mechanism and the articulation of a politically pertinent ethnic identity in the Jharkhand region.

All the major political interests, therefore, agreed that the reason behind the demand for a separate state in the Jharkhand region was the poor development profile of the region. This is also a good example of the exchange of information resources between the societal political actors and the State, which went on to alter the self-perception of the Jharkhandi identity. From a cultural identity, the Jharkhandi identity evolved into one that had as the primary basis of its articulation the poor development profile of Jharkhand, and which relegated the cultural aspects to the background. The State and the Jharkhandi political opinion had, thus, gradually created an articulation of the ethnic identity that was acceptable to both of them. The report of the COJM thus amplified the clear correlation which was seen between the demand for the creation of a separate state in the Jharkhand region and the poor performance of public policy since Independence.

Issue of Autonomy in Parliamentary Forums

The growing development imbalance in the Jharkhand region led to some important developments in the agenda of Indian politics. The first consequence was that the Indian state's ability to resolve political conflict without resort to violence declined further. The ultra-leftist alignment of some Jharkhandi leaders in the 1960s and 1970s (chapter 3) provided the perfect excuse for the State to crack down on the Jharkhand Alliance. At the same time, popular support for the Jharkhandi groups was declining which was expressed in the loss of electoral support for them. Consequently, the ability of the movement to launch popular agitation for securing its demands was diminished. In sum, from being the foremost political force in the Jharkhand region, the Jharkhandi groups became increasingly marginalised. Hence, the Jharkhandi leaders sought to involve themselves in parliamentary politics in order to make their point heard. The parliamentary approach involved asking a series of questions in the Lok Sabha which kept the issue on the national agenda.

The opinions expressed in the parliamentary debates are of salience. They not only provide us with a rare coherent articulation of the Jharkhandi points of view but also indicate the response to it across the political spectrum. The issue of creation of the state of Jharkhand was raised in Parliament a number of times without much consequence. For instance, Mukul Wasnik, Simon Marandi and Bir Singh Mahto tabled an unstarred question on July 9 1992[8] inquiring into the status of representation demanding the creation of Jharkhand state. M. M. Jacob, the then minister of state in the ministry of home affairs, replied that a number of meetings had been held, but "the Government of Bihar were requested to offer their comments on the recommendations of the Committee on Jharkhand Matters. Their comments are still awaited". No substantial discussion took place on the issue. In the classic manoeuvre of parliamentary nicety, the persons who had asked the questions had something to tell their constituents about their efforts, while the Government of India transferred the blame onto the Bihar government. In effect, the issue was put on the back burner for the time being.

Desirability of small states: Difference of opinion

Another example was a question in the Rajya Sabha on 30 November 1992, which sought to find out whether the government was considering the appointment of another states reorganisation commission to examine the numerous demands for creation of separate states. The debate which followed indicates that there was a difference of opinion regarding the desirability of small states. Ram Lala Rahi, the then deputy minister of home affairs, surmised that large states were more self-sufficient due to their variety of produce, whereas other members pointed out the advantages of smaller states in terms of their better manageability. The BJP MP, Sushma Swaraj, raised a pertinent point:

> उत्तरांचल, वनांचल या विदर्भ की मांग को पृथक कश्मीर या खालिस्तान की मांग की श्रेणी में नहीं रखा जा सकता। पृथकतावादी मांगों से दुनिया का नक्शा बदलता है और छोटे राज्यों की मांग मान लेने से केवल भारत का आंतरिक नक्शा बदलता है। ... कुछ राज्यों में यह मांग केवल प्रशासनिक प्रबंध के कारण उठ रही है।[9]
>
> [the demand for Uttaranchal, Vananchal, or Vidarbh cannot be placed in the category of the demand for a separate Kashmir or Khalistan. Separatist demands change the map of the world whereas if the demands for smaller states are acceded to, only the internal map of India will change. . . . In some states this demand is emerging only due to their administrative (mis) management.]

The view expressed by the BJP MP is significant since the BJP had been able to generate substantial following in the Jharkhand region, both among tribal as well as non-tribal sections of the population. This statement was in consonance with the dominant viewpoint and traced the roots of such demands to administrative mismanagement. Significantly, it also sought to categorise and differentiate between the demands for an independent sovereign state (such as Khalistan) and those for a separate state within the Indian Union.

This differentiation is significant when viewed in the light of resistance to the creation of new states on grounds of national unity and integrity. It seemed to be an obsession with the INC that no further states should be created in order to protect the

unity and integrity of the country. The deputy minister's reply expressed this point of view:

> सरकार का नज़रिया हमेशा व्यापक रहा है, राष्ट्रीय हित में रहा है, राज्यों के हित में रहा है और राज्यों के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में जो निवास करने वाले लोग हैं, उनकी समस्याओं की तरफ हमेशा उनका ध्यान रहा है। इसी दृष्टिकोण को लेकर हम चाहते हैं कि हम राष्ट्रीय एकता को मज़बूत करने का और लोगों के विकास करने का काम करें।[10]
>
> [the Government's point of view has always been broad, in national interest, in states' benefit and in the benefit of those who live in the various regions of the states, its attention have always been towards their problems. From this point of view, we wish to strengthen national unity and work towards their development.]

Apart from the misplaced emphasis on the unity of the country, the view of the government also carried the undertone of 'we know what is best for all of you'. Further, it did not recognise the difference between separatist movements, which might require a repressive response from the State, and movements for autonomy (such as the demand for the state of Jharkhand) within the Indian Union that required political and public policy-based solutions.

Nevertheless, the government underlined the construction of the demand for autonomy as being dependent on the level of development. S. B. Chavan, the then home minister, intervening in the same debate, said "if there is an economic blockade, it becomes my responsibility to call them and request them to call it off because it would harm the entire country. I do not agree that there has been a proper development of the Jharkhand area. In fact, the entire demand has arisen because of the fact that it was a totally neglected area in spite of the fact that resources are very rich in the area. . . . the kind of development which should have been there is not there".[11]

As is evident in the above extract, the government led by the INC continued to see a direct correlation between the demand for a separate Jharkhand state and the level of development in the region. This viewpoint had become so dominant by then that the rest of the discussion on the creation of a state in Jharkhand focused on whether small or large states were better to foster speedy development. There was very little reference to the cultural aspects

of the Jharkhand movement. It is noteworthy that MPs who had almost no relationship with the Jharkhand movement conducted the entire discussion. The leaders from Jharkhand did not intervene at any point to emphasise that their movement was a cultural one as well. This by default indicates that the Jharkhandi leaders were not unhappy with the 'development-deficit' definition of the movement.

BJP's position

The direct correlation between autonomy and development was further emphasised in the Resolution Regarding Creation of New States of Uttaranchal and Vananchal, tabled by Jagat Vir Singh Drona (BJP MP from Kanpur) on 5 March 1993 in the Lok Sabha. The resolution sought to recommend to the government that the two states (Uttaranchal and Vananchal) be created. In the opening statement itself, Jagat Vir Singh Drona drew a direct relationship between the two issues and observed that

> even after these 45 years of independence, there has been very little or negligible development in the hill areas of Uttar Pradesh and in the 16 districts under Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana area of Bihar. The people of the area have been expressing their resentment on the issue from time to time. . . . Since the independence no educational and medical facilities have been provided to the residents of these areas. . . . It becomes the duty of the Central government to do so. . . . Jharkhand Mahaparishad proposal was mooted to the effect that efforts were being made to form a Jharkhand state. . . . wherever various State Governments participate in such areas . . . the situation becomes complicated. . . . So, the proposal for formation of Jharkhand state [by] carving out some district from four States is not practicable nor it is in the interests of the country and the people of the area because difference of opinion will crop up from time to time which will stall the development schemes. In this connection, it is the well-considered opinion of my party [the BJP] that all the 16 districts in Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana areas have their won [own] (*sic*) culture, their own thinking and their own language and a state by the name of Vananchal may be formed comprising of these 16 districts.[12]

The above extract reflects two important points which explain the recent improvement in political support for the BJP in the

Jharkhand region. Firstly, the BJP was the first national party that offered a practical alternative to the demand for a Jharkhand state. It pointed out that the political possibility of carving out a new state comprising twenty-five districts spread over four states verged on improbability due to the differences of opinion among the four states concerned. Consequently, the likelihood of creation of such a state was remote. Secondly, the BJP argued that in such a scenario of continuing disagreement, development work in the region would suffer. Thus, it raised a bogey of even worse development policy effort if the demand for a separate state was continued in the present form. At the same time, the BJP was also able to alter the way in which the demand for a Jharkhand state had been articulated since Independence. It postulated that the region of Santhal Pargana and Chota Nagpur was in some way the real Jharkhand, dwelling upon the separateness and uniqueness of the region. The electorate, faced with the already poor development performance of the public machinery, was quick to understand this message. In a surprisingly short time, all the major political opinions had accepted this approach.

Jagat Vir Singh Drona continued his rather lengthy speech and emphasised that south Bihar region was contributing disproportionately to the economy of Bihar and India and was getting very few returns. He painted a dismal picture of the region in terms of absence of educational and medical facilities and employment opportunities, and added: "it is obvious that unless a separate state is formed, the people there, will not have political approach. . . . They will not be able to think seriously over the problems of their area personally in [a] practical way".[13] Clearly, a direct link was constructed between the creation of a Jharkhand state and improvement of the development profile of the region.

Cutting across the political spectrum, various members expressed similar views. They differed marginally in their views, but there was a common thread in their speeches. All the speakers concurred on the view that the demand for autonomy was due to imbalances in the development of the region. All of them quoted cultural factors such as language and cultural uniqueness but soon went on to emphasise that south Bihar was rich in mineral and forest resources. According to them, the speed of develop-

ment in the region was not in consonance with its contribution to the economy of Bihar and India.

JMM: Sharing of power

Suraj Mandal, one of the JMM MPs, intervened in the debate and read out a catalogue of ills that had plagued the region. However, he did not point out any cultural factor as the basis of the JMM's demand for a separate state. He emphasised the mineral wealth of the region but also brought up a new issue which had not been underlined until then. He asked for sharing of power with the people of the Jharkhand region: "no development of the area was done. The people were not allowed sharing of power. Rather colonialism was no [on] (*sic*) the rise after exploiting of its mineral resources and establishing factories".[14]

No other political group had brought up this issue of sharing of power with the populace of the Jharkhand region. The general trajectory of the debate on the Jharkhand issue until then had been on the course of action that was best for speedy development of the people of the region. It essentially involved a greater sharing of development resources. However, this intervention by Suraj Mandal points to the fact that the Jharkhandi groups were no longer happy to share economic resources only; they wanted to share power as well. This is another good example of the operation of the Modified Resource Dependence Model. The Jharkhandi leaders, after failing to force the State to share its largesse of policy resources and after losing political patronage of the electorate, were now demanding a slice of power. Since this political group had failed to bargain effectively for other kinds of resource sharing, it was now seeking a new kind of resource sharing in order to achieve some degree of control over other kinds of resources.

It can be argued that this new element in the discourse of political autonomy reflected a desperation on the part of the Jharkhandi leaders in the face of a shrinking support base. However, in some ways, this new demand speaks of an increasing maturity and confidence of the Jharkhandi groups. Over the years, they had come to realise that any meaningful exchange of resources between the Jharkhandi electorate and the state could occur only if the

resources controlled by the electorate (apart from mere political patronage) becomes crucial to the Indian state (which controls vast amounts of political, economic and information resources). This exercise of demanding a share of governmental power by decentralisation of the administrative apparatus of the state was an effort to improve the resource base of the electorate. A greater local control over the economic and information resources by the populace of Jharkhand would also augment their political influence. This would, in turn, secure a better policy response from the state due to the region's mineral deposits.

Nature of the Jharkhand movement: Consensual view

The protracted debate on the resolution led to a consensual view about the nature and character of the Jharkhand movement. The remarks of Chitta Basu (an All India Forward Bloc MP from Barasat in West Bengal) on 19 March 1993 seem to summarise the mainstream opinion:

> there is no basic question of ethnicity, language or culture for the demand of creation of Jharkhand State. The basic issue or the basic emotion or the basic sensitivity for the demand of creation of Jharkhand state is a regional disparity of development . . . and because of regional disparity in development, the question of having a separate state has arisen and not on the basis of language, not on the basis of culture and not on the basis of ethnicity because even if Jharkhand State is created, it will be a multi-lingual State . . ., it will be a multi-ethnic State; . . . it will be a multi-cultural State. . . . [The problem exists because] there has been exploitation, that there has been a backwardness; and that backwardness has been a planned backwardness. . . . The grievance is even if some resource is transferred to the State by the centre, the appropriate proportion does not go [to] the Jharkhand area and therefore, there should be an autonomous council which should be guaranteed with wide powers of administration and legislative business and also guaranteed with statutory financial resources both from the centre and State. This can be reasonable, rational and satisfactory solution to the Jharkhand problem.[15]

Such an emphasis on the development problems in the region by the Jharkhandi groups, the government and political parties across the political spectrum altered the character of the demand

for autonomy itself. Increasingly, there emerged a consensus in favour of decentralised development machinery in the region, but not a separate state. This occurred despite there being a largely consensual view that small states were better from the point of view of development effort as well as for efficient administration of the area concerned. There were some members who voiced their concerns about the state of exploitation in the Jharkhand region continuing, even becoming worse, or new forms of exploitation emerging in a new Jharkhand state. Hence, the government did not see it prudent to create smaller states as solutions to the bottlenecks in poor implementation of public policy. Here, it is pertinent to speculate that if so much emphasis had not been laid on the development problems in the Jharkhand region, the issue of a separate state might not have been overtaken by an autonomous council although, perhaps, it would not have enjoyed cross-party support in any other form.

It is noteworthy that these debates in the Lok Sabha were used by the JMM in a way that was unknown in the political life of India. The JMM published extracts from the debates in the form of little booklets which were distributed to the general population in the Jharkhand region. These booklets contained the interventions by Suraj Mandal and Shibu Soren in the Lok Sabha. Through these booklets, the JMM was making an effort to point out to the local populace that despite being a small parliamentary group, the JMM was trying its best to put forward the points of view of the Jharkhandi people in the highest forums of power. This action was in consonance with the earlier point made by Suraj Mandal that the Jharkhandi population now wanted to share power. The availability of parliamentary debates to the common man performed this exact function of giving the impression that their access to power had improved through their JMM representatives.

It must also be noted that the parliamentary debates as well as the debates in the Constituent Assembly (chapter 2) seem to indicate that the government believed that it was possible to evolve an objective set of criteria for the creation of a new state within the Indian Union. While some movements such as the Jharkhand movement sought a separate state to secure political recognition

of their tribal/cultural identity, the national mainstream opinion seemed to be searching for a set of non-ascriptive criteria to create such states. The issue of poor rate of development in a region within an existing state seemed to have been accepted as this objective criterion. Political parties across the political spectrum, including the JMM and other Jharkhandi political groups, seemed to have come to accept that a faster pace of development (however defined) was desirable. They also seemed to believe that administrative reorganisation of states (or creation of new states) ought to be made in a way that secured a faster and more efficient public policy implementation. It follows from this that the only objective (and politically acceptable) grounds for the creation of a new state in the Jharkhand region was the fact that within the existing arrangements, the development profile of Jharkhand had declined over the last fifty years. Therefore, some degree of autonomy for the region was essential if speedy development was to be fostered.

Political Parties' Approach to Autonomy for Jharkhand

The demand for an autonomous state in the Jharkhand region was a complex political process in which the political parties were key players in the exchange of resources between the State and the electorate. The political parties active in the region influenced the demand for autonomy by not only shaping the opinions of the general population of the Jharkhand region but also by playing a significant role in articulating these opinions. The manifestos published by various parties for the Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha elections are important in this respect. These manifestos are also important because the political parties attempt to seek political patronage from the region based on the promises made in the manifestos. In this sense, the manifestos form an important link in the resource dependence relationship between the electorate and political parties (and through the latter, the State).

An analysis of the election manifestos of national parties (BJP, INC, CPM and National Front/Janata Dal) and the JMM follows. The election manifestos of the JMM are the only set of manifestos of a regional political party which have been analysed below. There are a number of reasons for this. The first is availability of manifestos. The manifestos of older Jharkhandi polit-

ical parties (such as the JHP, the CSPJ, the PHJP and such like), which had a brief, sometimes meteoric, existence on the political horizons of Jharkhand between 1950 and the 1980s, are not available. Second, most of these parties no longer exist. This makes it extremely difficult to gauge their political viewpoint vis-à-vis the demand for a Jharkhand state.

Besides, the creation of a separate state in the Jharkhand region falls within the domain of Parliament. Consequently, the opinions expressed in the political manifestos of national parties are relevant. Only a national political party that is able to secure a sufficient majority in Parliament can ensure that a bill for the creation of the state of Jharkhand is passed. The analysis of the manifestos of national parties is also significant on account of the fact that the national parties also compete for popular support regionally. An analysis of these manifestos will indicate how the political parties have treated the issue of a new Jharkhand state when going to the electorate for Lok Sabha elections.

An analysis of the manifestos of the CPM is also pertinent because of its electoral presence and influence in the region as well as due to the fact that the party represents a significant viewpoint. The CPM may not have any reasonable chance of forming the Central government, but its opinions are politically relevant. Its manifestos not only reflect the analyses and opinions of a section of liberal-Left intelligentsia of India but are also important in a scenario when the CPM is a part of a coalition government at the Centre (as was the case in the Eleventh Lok Sabha during 1996–97).

The older political manifestos of most political parties are not very enlightening about the Jharkhand issue. Moreover, it was only after the early 1980s that the Jharkhand movement became politically volatile in terms of economic blockades. When the JCC, the JMM and the AJSU were successful in holding up transportation of minerals from the region, national attention was forced on to the problems of the Jharkhand region. Therefore, the 1980s was probably the most significant decade for the movement in terms of the definition of its character and demands.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

There have been a number of political parties in the Jharkhand region which have attempted to align themselves with the demand

for a separate state in the hope of greater political and electoral legitimacy. However, in the continuous process of political realignments in the region, many of them have vanished from the active political scene. As has been outlined in chapter 3, constant splits and mergers left the JMM as the only politically active Jharkhandi party in south Bihar.

Manifesto for the 1995 Vidhan Sabha election

It has been seen in the preceding pages that the Jharkhandi political groups played a marginal role in the creation of the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council. For instance, in the parliamentary debates, the JMM MPs did not play a central role in the debate on the resolution regarding 'Creation of new states of Uttaranchal and Vananchal'. In fact, the resolution was not even tabled by a JMM MP. Another good example of this marginal role is the fact that the JMM's contribution to COJM was restricted to a note of dissent (in the report) against the creation of an autonomous council. It was unable to influence the COJM in any major way. However, this fact did not prevent the JMM from taking credit for the creation of the JAAC in their manifesto for the 1995 Vidhan Sabha election.[16] The manifesto begins with the slogan "परिषद लिया है चोट से, अब राज्य लेंगे वोट से" [We have obtained the Council by force, now we will obtain the state with the help of votes] (*Election Manifesto of JMM, 1995* 1995: 1).

The JMM manifesto clearly claimed credit for the creation of the JAAC:

> झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा 'स्वशासी परिषद' को अपनी उपलब्धि मानते हुए बिहार की जनतादल सरकार की झारखण्ड विरोधी नीतियों, कार्यक्रम और दृष्टिकोण की भर्त्सना करती है जिसके कारण (1) 'स्वशासी परिषद' को पर्याप्त और समुचित वित्तीय और प्रशासनिक अधिकार नहीं मिले और (2) 'स्वशासी परिषद' के गठन में जरुरत से ज्यादा देर हुई। *(Election Manifesto of JMM, 1995* 1995: 1)
>
> [The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha considers the 'Autonomous Council' as its achievement and criticises the anti-Jharkhand policies, programmes and viewpoints of the Janata Dal government of Bihar due to which (1) 'Autonomous Council' was not given adequate and necessary financial and administrative powers and (2) undue delays were made in the formation of the 'Autonomous Council'.]

This document is also interesting and important in the light of the Modified Resource Dependence Model. The manifesto goes on to say:

> झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा अलग झारखण्ड राज्य के लिए संघर्षरत झारखण्ड की जनता को बधाई देती है कि उसके सतत् संघर्ष और आंदोलन को 'झारखण्ड स्वशासी परिषद' के रुप में मान्यता मिली है। (Ibid.)
>
> [The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha congratulates the population of Jharkhand which has been engaged in the struggle for the Jharkhand state. Its continuous efforts and struggle has been recognised in the form of the 'Jharkhand Autonomous Council'.]

This statement in the JMM manifesto demonstrates the fact that the movement depended on the State's recognition for the legitimisation of their demand. The resource dependence of the movement on the State (governmental recognition of the demand) is clear. In tacit terms, this action on the part of the government also amplified the fact that the development profile of the Jharkhand region had left much to be desired. The JAAC was seen as a body which would promote speedy and efficient implementation of the development programmes with the help of local resources and manpower. This was a clear recognition of the fact that until then, the performance of the development machinery in the region had been far from efficient. The creation of the JAAC bestowed the long elusive legitimacy on the movement. In the past, all the considerations of the demand had seen no case for the creation of any new representative development body in the Jharkhand region.

The JMM's point of view carried the undertone that the JMM saw itself as the vanguard of the Jharkhandi interests in the region. In some ways, this was correct. There was no major politically active party in the region which clearly aligned itself with the creation of the state of Jharkhand out of parts of the four states, as the JMM did:

> झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा ने हमेशा से 'झारखण्ड स्वशासी परिषद' को झारखण्ड राज्य की राह का पड़ाव माना है। हमारा अंतिम लक्ष्य ओड़िसा, बंगाल, बिहार और मध्य प्रदेश के झारखण्डी भूभाग वाला 'झारखण्ड राज्य' है। राज्य के लिए अपने संघर्ष की प्रतिबध्दता का वचन झामुमो देती है। (*Election Manifesto of JMM 1995* 1995: 1)

> [The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha has always considered the 'Jharkhand Autonomous Council' as a stepping stone on the road to the Jharkhand state. Our ultimate goal is the 'Jharkhand state' comprising the Jharkhandi landmasses in Orissa, Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The JMM pledges its commitment to continue the struggle for the state.]

It is noteworthy that the issue of tribal identity did not appear in the manifesto of the JMM in 1995. Perhaps, the necessity to widen the political base compelled the JMM to project itself as the true representative of all the people living in the geographical region of Jharkhand:

> झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा झारखण्ड क्षेत्र के सभी समुदायों, वर्गों, शोषित, पीड़ित मानवता का एक ऐसा संगठन है जिसे इस क्षेत्र के मजदूरों, किसानों, छात्रों, नौजवानों, महिलाओं, बुध्दिजीवियों, व्यापारिओं और खिलाड़ियों ने अपना राजनीतिक संगठन माना है और इस जिम्मेदारी को पूरा करने के लिए झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा प्रतिबद्ध है। (*Election Manifesto of JMM 1995* 1995: 1)
>
> [The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is an organisation of all groups, classes, exploited, tortured humanity of this region, which the labourers, farmers, students, youth, women, intellectuals, merchants and sportsmen of this region have considered as their own political organisation, and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is committed to fulfilling this responsibility.]

The manifesto sought to highlight the development problems of the region rather than underlining its tribal character:

> झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा मानती है कि पर्याप्त और समुचित वित्तीय और प्रशासनिक अधिकार के बिना सदियों से शोषित, और उपेक्षित झारखण्डी जनता की शोषण मुक्ति और विकास की ग़ति मे वह तेजी नही आ पाएगी जो इस पिछड़ा क्षेत्र को समता और सम्पन्नता युक्त राज्य बनाने के लिये अनिवार्य है। (*Election Manifesto of JMM 1995* 1995: 1)
>
> [The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha believes that without adequate financial and administrative powers, it will not be possible to ameliorate the centuries of exploitation and marginalisation of the Jharkhandi population. These powers are essential to accelerate development to a rate which is required to convert this backward region into an equitable and prosperous state.]

Thus, the whole question of the autonomy of the Jharkhand region came to acquire more geographical, regional and develop-

ment-related overtones. The issue of the tribal identity of the region was lost in the emphasis on the development problems, both by the governmental agencies as well as the political groups of the region.

Manifesto for the 1996 Lok Sabha election

In the best tradition of the ideological fluidity of the Jharkhandi movement, by the 1996 Lok Sabha election, the issue of the unique cultural identity was back in the JMM manifesto. The motto of the 1996 election manifesto was:

> अपनी धरती, अपनी नीति, अपनी पहचान, अपनी संस्कृति
> अपनी भाषा, अपनी परंपराएं, झारखण्ड अपना सुखमय बनाएं। *(Election Manifesto of JMM 1996* 1996: 1)
>
> [Our land, our policy, our identity, our culture.
> Our language, our traditions; let's make our Jharkhand happy and prosperous.]

The inability of the JMM to widen its electoral support, as well as its inability to secure any substantial powers for the JAAC from the Bihar government, had a lot to do with this reorientation. The Bihar Vidhan Sabha had passed the Act constituting the JAAC in 1994, but the necessary financial resources and administrative powers had still not been transferred to the JAAC. In fact, the Act itself was notified only in March 1995. Consequently, once again in the 1996 Lok Sabha election, the JMM tried to resurrect the cultural aspects of the Jharkhandi identity in order to mobilise political support. This was done to persuade the Bihar government to convert the JAAC into an effective development body with an overall control of development activities in the region, and to base it at Ranchi and not Patna.

In the 1996 JMM manifesto, there was a mix of emphases on the historical tradition and culture of the Jharkhand region and development issues. The manifesto began with the familiar emphasis on the historical construction of the Jharkhandi identity. However, the emphasis on the development factors as well as efforts to reassure the non-tribal population of the region remained of prime importance. The manifesto correlated the need

for development to this historical construction and reassured the non-tribals in the following manner:

> शोषण से मुक्ति के लिए झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा की अवधारणा है कि राजनीतिक दृष्टिकोण, प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था, वित्तीय व्यवस्था और समग्र विकास की नीति झारखण्ड की आवश्यकता के अनरुप निर्धारित हो। ... यह सभी जानते हैं कि झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा झारखण्ड के सभी वर्गों के नागरिकों की सशक्त आवाज है, उनके संघर्ष का प्रथम साथी है। झारखण्ड मुक्ति मोर्चा झारखण्ड के नागरिकों के संघर्ष के हर मुद्दे पर, उनके साथ हुंकार भरने के लिये वचनबद्ध है। *(Election Manifesto of JMM, 1996* 1996: 1)
>
> [For freedom from exploitation, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is of the firm belief that the political viewpoint, administrative arrangements, financial arrangements, and policies for all-round development must be framed according to the needs of Jharkhand. ... Everyone is aware of the fact that the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is the strong voice of the citizens of Jharkhand from all classes and their best friend in their struggle. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is pledged to join the citizens in their battle cry for struggle on all issues.]

Further on, the manifesto listed a long charter of promises without many specifics. It promised to start agitation on a number of issues without any concrete goals or programmes. The only specific matter mentioned was that they would "struggle" for the transfer of adequate administrative and financial powers to the JAAC.

Thus, the leaders of the JMM were eager to keep all the elements of the Jharkhandi movement as part of their political manifesto. On the one hand, they invoked the historical tradition of the region which was essentially tribal, but on the other hand, they were equally keen to garner support from all sections of the Jharkhandi society. Simultaneously, the JMM was not willing to give up the development-based demand, since the poor development profile of the region had succeeded in securing governmental (the State's) recognition of their demands in the form of, at least, the legislative creation of the JAAC. However, the JMM was also keen to point out that its acceptance of the JAAC (as opposed to a full-fledged state) was only a tactical withdrawal. As the central committee member of the JMM, Shailendra Bhattacharya, pointed out time and again in the interviews with him in January and May 1996, the JMM wished to use the JAAC as an example to prove that the Jharkhandi leaders were capable of

administering their own affairs. As explained by him, once the JMM and other Jharkhandi leaders showed their mettle in administration, they would seek the creation of a state. This point of view was also reflected in the JMM manifesto for the 1996 Lok Sabha election.

Thus, the overall articulation of Jharkhandi identity as reflected in JMM's poll promises was a mixture of a number of issues in which the development aspect was always predominant. The identity of a Jharkhandi was, hence, a mixture of a number of unspecified themes such as culture, heritage and tradition. Nonetheless, the JMM did succeed in creating a politically significant identity, even if only for the purpose of securing a better share of development funds.

Bharatiya Janata Party

The BJP has been, comparatively, a new entrant to the electoral scene of the Jharkhand region. However, it has been able to secure considerable popular support in the region, as in other parts of India. In fact, the BJP proposed some fresh alternatives to the demand for the creation of a new state of Jharkhand which found increasing political support in the Jharkhand region.

Manifesto for the 1989 Lok Sabha election

The BJP portrays itself as a political party seeking to ensure equity, progress and social justice. Its manifesto for the Lok Sabha election of 1989 began with the following words:

> भारतीय जनता पार्टी ... कानून और व्यवस्था, सामाजिक न्याय और आन्तरिक तथा बाह्य सुरक्षा की समर्थक है। यह गरीबों तथा पद्दलितों के उत्थान के लिए समर्पित है। (*Election Manifesto of BJP, 1989* n.d: 5)
>
> [The Bharatiya Janata Party ... supports law and order, social justice and internal and external security. It is devoted to the uplift of poor and downtrodden.]

However, such clichés are nothing new in Indian politics and none of the mainstream political parties offer anything different. All of them promise to improve the lot of the poor, the backward classes and the downtrodden.

As far as the question of autonomy is concerned, the 1989 BJP manifesto does not provide us with any insight. It may be significant that the manifesto isolated cases such as those of the North-east, Jammu and Kashmir, and Punjab and made some limited promises for these regions. There was almost no mention of the issue of the Jharkhand region or the question of its autonomy. However, the pro-Jharkhand supporters of the BJP in south Bihar may have taken heart from what the manifesto had to say in the brief section titled "सत्ता का विकेन्द्रीकरण" [Decentralisation of Power]:

> भारतीय जनता पार्टी पंचायतों तथा अन्य स्थानीय स्वशासन की संस्थाओं को सुनिश्चित रुप से संवैधानिक दर्जा प्रदान करेगी और उन्हें संसाधनों में सुनिश्चित रुप से भागीदार बनायेगी जिससे कि उन्हें राज्य अथवा केन्द्र सरकार की कृपा पर निर्भर न रहना पड़े। (*Election Manifesto of BJP 1989* n.d: 15)
>
> [The Bharatiya Janata Party will confer constitutional status on the panchayats and other local self-government institutions and make them a partner in the sharing of resources in a well-determined manner so that they are not at the mercy of state or central governments.]

This promise in the manifesto may have been used by the local BJP activists to argue that if a BJP government took office, it would favourably consider the demand for the Jharkhand state. As emerged in the interview with the BJP MP from Ranchi, this promise was interpreted as the willingness of a future BJP government to create the state of Jharkhand. About the tribal population in India, the manifesto said that schemes would be framed so that tribals could be saved from exploitation, alienation of land and indebtedness. Additionally, it also promised to amend the forest-produce laws so as to enable a better realisation of forest rights of the tribals. It also promised a sub-plan to ensure the economic development of the tribal people (*Election Manifesto of BJP 1989* n.d: 29–31). These are some of the many general promises made in the 1989 manifesto. As far as autonomy for the region of Jharkhand was concerned, there were no concrete promises. In fact, the above proposals were in line with the general policy of the Indian state since Independence.

Manifesto for the 1991 Lok Sabha Election

The BJP election manifesto for the midterm Lok Sabha poll in 1991 stated a clear policy towards the region of Jharkhand, as part of its policy of smaller states:

> The BJP recognises that regional imbalances have developed in some states because of their size. The party would appoint a commission to report on formation of smaller states which are economically and democratically viable. Initially, the BJP will have Uttaranchal, Vananchal and Union Territory of Delhi as three new states of the Indian Union. (*Election Manifesto of BJP 1991* n.d.: 3)

It is significant that in the BJP manifesto, the thrust was on the regional imbalances borne out of the large sizes of the existing states. The manifesto made no mention of the identity aspect of the Jharkhandi region and sought to emphasise the development-deficit line of argument. It is also noteworthy that the BJP practically hijacked the issue of a Jharkhand state with its Vananchal proposals. The leaders of JMM and other Jharkhandi parties had a vision of a Jharkhand state comprising twenty-five districts from four states. The BJP, on the other hand, proposed the creation of a state called Vananchal from the sixteen districts (later 18 due to internal reorganisation) of south Bihar only. The new proposals of the BJP offered an alternative that was simpler to implement since it was administratively and politically easier to divide a state into two than to carve out portions of four states to create a new state. The political mileage which the BJP drew from this proposal in the region of south Bihar was of such significance that by the early nineties, except for a few hardliners, most mainstream JMM leaders had accepted the fact that any hope of seeing a separate Jharkhand state would materialise only if they restricted their demand to the districts of south Bihar alone.[17]

The fact that this alternative offered by the BJP was premised wholly on the 'poor development profile' argument did not bother anyone in the region because the Jharkhandi opinion in the region had been using the same argument since Independence, and by the early nineties, one suspects, all the Jharkhandi leaders also believed it. Moreover, an emphasis on the tribal identity would in all likelihood displease the sizeable non-tribal element in the region. Hence, even the JMM used terms like culture and heri-

tage in a general way so as to not exclude about three-quarters of the population of the region which is of non-tribal origins.

Returning to the 1991 manifesto, it is noteworthy that as far as the BJP was concerned, the whole issue of a separate state for the Jharkhand region was part of its favoured design of smaller, more manageable states. As one BJP MP argued, the whole issue of creating the state of Jharkhand was contingent on the fact that the large size of the state of Bihar had led to imbalances in development. Creating smaller and more efficiently manageable states would ensure that local needs would be handled in a more efficient manner.[18] Consequently, as far as the BJP was concerned, it may be safely deduced that the Jharkhand issue was a development issue and not that of an identity demanding political recognition. This observation is strengthened by the fact that the BJP 1991 manifesto referred to unrest in the Northeast, Punjab, Ladakh, and even Telangana under separate sections, but the issue of the Jharkhand region found mention only as a part of its policy of smaller and more manageable states.

Manifesto for the 1996 Lok Sabha election

The 1996 manifesto of the BJP went one step further and promised to "carve out Uttaranchal, Vananchal, Vidarbh and Chattisgarh and give them full statehood [and] consider setting up a Commission to examine the formation of smaller states" (*Election Manifesto of BJP, 1996* 1996: 10). By this time, the BJP had established its views about the Jharkhand region in the national political life. The BJP regarded the issue of Jharkhand as emanating from the poor performance of the policy-delivery mechanism in large, poorly managed states. The fact that there had emerged almost a consensus in the parliamentary debates that the poor development profile of the region demanded the creation of a state, added to the validity of its views on the issue. Besides, any political opposition to the BJP's proposal of creation of a state of Vananchal from the districts of south Bihar was blunted by the BJP also promising the creation of a state of Chattisgarh from the tribal regions of Madhya Pradesh. That left only a few districts of Orissa and West Bengal (included in the original demand of the Jharkhandi groups) that would not attain some form of auton-

omy under the proposals of the BJP. Any opposition from the tribal elements in the Jharkhand region was taken care of by constant promises of "social equality for all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through political and economic empowerment" (*Election Manifesto of BJP 1996* 1996: 60).

The fact that the BJP had consistently clubbed together the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes since their first manifesto indicates that they did not see any question of a tribal identity existing in the region of south Bihar or elsewhere. Their bottom line seemed to be that all social and political unrest was rooted in poorly managed and inefficient implementation of public policy in large, unmanageable states. The BJP did recognise *vanvasi*s as a societal group, but the undertone of this recognition was reminiscent of one strand of the colonial discourse and the early social reformers of the nineteenth century which saw tribes at a lower level of evolution, waiting to be absorbed into the larger Hindu fold (chapter 2).

Nonetheless, the BJP's version of the issue of Jharkhand caught the popular imagination. During fieldwork in January and May 1996, it was noticed that the BJP did have a sizeable following in the Jharkhand region. Also significant was the fact that, unofficially, the JMM had gradually scaled down its stance of not settling for anything less than a state carved out of the four states concerned, and it accepted the JAAC with its jurisdiction over the districts of south Bihar only. Following the same political logic, the geographical jurisdiction of the JAAC would become that of a future state of Jharkhand.

Indian National Congress

Manifesto for the 1984 Lok Sabha election

The INC manifesto for the 1984 Lok Sabha election talked more of its achievements during the 1980–84 term of office than what it had to offer in the next five years. The general tone of the manifesto was that the INC government had done a splendid job in the past five years and would review its policies in order to find ways to improve them. Consequently, it had nothing to say about the Jharkhand movement. With regard to the Scheduled Tribes

in the country, the INC manifesto for the 1984 election promised to:

> – Implement effectively the strategy of the tribal sub-plan with stress on human resource development with particular reference to women, beneficiary-oriented schemes, drinking water supply, health services, general and technical education and technological improvement of agriculture, animal husbandry[,] fisheries, village and cottage industries and forestry.
> – Protect the distinctive culture and way of life of tribal communities.
> – Protect the rights of tribal communities to forest produce. (*Election Manifesto of INC(I) 1984* n.d.: 18)

As is clear from the above extract, the INC decided to continue its emphasis on the development problems faced by the tribals, as the mainstay of their policies towards the Scheduled Tribes. The now well-known and modestly successful Tribal Sub-Plan continued to be their central plank. However, the INC was, perhaps, the only mainstream national political party which took some note of the tribal and cultural components of the movement. It sought to protect the "distinctive culture and way of life of the tribal communities", but this effort was in consonance with the general policy towards the tribes since Independence. It did not make any concessions to the effect that a tribal identity might also seek political autonomy. Since Independence, the general approach of the INC had been based on the development model adopted by the Indian state. The INC sought to minimise the effect of political demand-making by the Jharkhand movement through a more intensive development effort.

Manifesto for the 1989 Lok Sabha election

There were very few differences between the 1984 and 1989 manifestos of the INC as far as policies towards the Jharkhand region were concerned. The INC government was re-elected to office in 1984, and consequently, there was a need for them to defend their policies during the 1984–89 period. The whole issue of an autonomous administrative arrangement in the region was conspicuous by its absence, in the 1989 manifesto. A greater amount of financial investment in public policy initiative towards

the tribal population was again promised. The manifesto drew attention to the fact that "a National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation, with an authorised capital of Rs. 75 crores [Rs. 750 million] has been established to develop and assist schemes of employment generation for SC/ST communities. . . . a Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation [TRIFED] has been set up as a multi-state co-operative society to provide remunerative prices to the tribals for minor forest produce". For the future years, the INC promised that "future programmes for Harijan and Adivasi welfare will consolidate the large number of initiatives already taken. In addition, programmes will be designed for specific occupation groups. Schemes under agriculture and irrigation will be given priority" (*Election Manifesto of INC(I) 1989* n.d.: 26–7).

Thus, as far as the INC was concerned, it continued to believe that political problems like the demand for separate state or autonomy could and ought to be dealt with by providing greater financial outlay and more intensive policy efforts. Ironically, the INC leaders, despite a long experience in governance, were not alive to the fact that although it may be possible to contain the sharpening of political identities to a certain degree by intensive and efficient policy initiatives, efforts to satisfy the political demands of already articulated identities by similar action were unlikely to yield significant results. The existing channels of exchange of resources between the State and the societal and political groups in the Jharkhand region had not worked in the last half-century. The INC seemed to be conveniently unconcerned about the overall declining development profile of the Jharkhand region which was a result of this skewed exchange of resources and instead sought to direct its policy efforts at the ST population only. It carried on with its emphasis on a more intensive rationalist and bureaucratic policy implementation with the target-group approach, to deal with political problems.

The INC manifestos with their overemphasis on tribal development did not consider the fact that the Jharkhand region as a whole (which included more non-tribals than tribals) might require some solution. This too in a situation where the JMM was straining to assure the Jharkhandi electorate that the Jharkhand movement represented all sections of the Jharkhandi soci-

ety and the BJP was reinforcing this picture by promising a state on regional/geographical basis. The INC, on the other hand, showed a remarkable lack of ability to respond to new realities with new policy mechanisms. It went on flogging the older policies of direct support to the Scheduled Tribe population in the region, even though the tribal and non-tribal populations were equal victims of development imbalances and the ST population was actually a minority in the region of Jharkhand (even if all the ST persons were seen as constituting a monolithic political bloc, which they didn't). Besides, political action by the JMM and the AJSU in the past years had secured support from almost all sections of the Jharkhandi population. All this made the INC's policy out of touch with reality.

Manifesto for the 1991 Lok Sabha election

The INC manifesto of 1991 differed from the manifesto of 1989 in only one respect. It had a substantial section which underlined the follies, according to the INC, committed by the National Front governments of V. P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar. This section was followed by a list of achievements of the INC in its last term in office. As far as the future was concerned, the INC in its characteristic way promised to review and strengthen the programmes that it had already started prior to 1989. With regard to the ST population, the 1991 manifesto promised to extend and strengthen the various ongoing programmes.

The 1991 manifesto of the INC also promised to invest the SC/ST Commission with statutory powers of enforcement. Additionally, it promised to set up special courts "in adequate numbers in all tribal areas of the country to protect tribal interests, including protection against arbitrary acquisition by forest officials, ensure the handing over of forest lands to genuine tribal owners, and safeguard customary tribal laws and practices" (*Election Manifesto of INC(I), 1991* n.d.: 27–8).

The INC continued to be sensitive to and acknowledge the existence of some uniqueness of culture and practices in the tribal regions of the country, but failed to come up with any new solutions to the movements that were sprouting in almost every tribal area in India. It did not succeed in devising any practical political solution to political demands in the Jharkhand region.

Manifesto for the 1996 general election

The INC manifesto for 1996 general election, once again, listed a catalogue of achievements of the past five years and promised stability. However, as the results of the election of 1996 showed, stability and status quo were not good enough for most of the electorate of India and they wanted change, while all that the INC promised was more investment in the ongoing programmes. As far as tribal development was concerned, the INC pointed to the ten-fold increase in the turnover of TRIFED established in 1987. However, faced with persistent demands from most tribal areas in the country, the INC made a small concession by promising that the "Tribal Commission under Article 339 (1) of the Constitution will be constituted soon to report on the administration of Scheduled Areas and welfare of Scheduled Tribes in States" (*Election Manifesto of INC(I), 1996* n.d.: 18).

Despite considerable unrest with regard to the question of autonomy in the Jharkhand region and serious disturbances in the transportation of minerals from the region due to the economic blockades, the INC did not think it important to reconsider its approach towards the region. The debates in Parliament over the resolution tabled by the BJP, the creation of the JAAC, the furores over the non-notification of the JAAC Bill, and other similar events did not lead it to re-examine its approach. The Congress Party continued its approach of pumping in an ever-increasing amount of development funds in the region, although this made almost no difference to the region's development profile. Policies intended to target the tribal population for development initiatives were not able to fulfil their intended purpose. It seems that the INC also failed to realise that the Jharkhand issue was no longer an issue of tribal identity, but had emerged as a regionalist aspiration of the entire Jharkhandi population.

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

The political value of the CPM manifestos lies in the fact that leftist political parties/groups had a considerable degree of influence on the political life of south Bihar in the 1960s and 1970s. In fact, most of the present leaders of the JMM have flirted with leftist ideology at one point of time or another (see chapter 3).

Moreover, the CPM and some ultra-leftist political groups still command some political support in Jharkhand. Often, the support for these parties does not fully express itself in the electoral results, but the vigorous efforts by leftist activists to educate the populace were noticed in the field study. The vaguely Marxist rhetoric of the Jharkhandi political groups also makes the view of the CPM relevant. Moreover, as was the case with the government during the term of the Eleventh Lok Sabha (1996–97), the CPM was able to exercise some degree of influence over policy formulation by being part of a coalition government.

Political analysis in 1981 and 1991

The CPM is one of the few political parties in India which regularly publishes an analysis of the political situation in India. In 1981, their analysis of the problems in tribal areas was:

> [reservations] have proved farcical and the Scheduled Tribes have been less successful than Harijans in reaping minimum benefits from reservations. ... the process of expropriation from land has gone apace, notwithstanding pious legislations preventing transfer of land to non-adivasi. ... in the adivasi areas, endowed with mineral reserves, the Adivasis get the lowest paid jobs. ... in the interior also, the slogan of separate state—Jharkhand, etc.—are being raised for a long time. But the Congress (I) government would not think of an autonomous district or region. ... 'Drive out non-Adivasi from the Adivasi areas' is also the slogan in Bihar tribal areas. (*CPM, Report on Political Development* 1981: 31–3)

Clearly, the CPM saw a close relationship between the poor development profile and the demand for autonomy in the Jharkhand region. The election manifesto of the CPM for the 1991 Lok Sabha election continued with this analysis:

> The tribal areas in the country are in turmoil. Centuries of oppression have been heightened by the rapacious loot of contractors and traders. Their lands are snatched away, their traditional rights in the forests blocked; their women folk sold into prostitution and the men forced to work in slave conditions. Their struggle to assert their tribal identity, linguistic-cultural distinctiveness meets with cruel repression. (*Election Manifesto of CPM*, 1991 1991: 8–9)

Despite the fact that it is worded slightly strongly and tries to imply that there had consistently been a deterioration in the development profile of the region over the past half-century, the CPM manifesto was the only one that dealt with interlinkages between culture, identity and development. It went against dominant public opinion that the tribal issue was merely one of development deficit. The CPM was able to come to terms with the fact that the tribal regions in the country were (and still are) looking for political solutions to their problems and not merely an ever-increasing allocation of resources, of which most will never reach the intended beneficiaries. The manifesto opined elsewhere that "without giving more powers to states and ensuring autonomy for the ethnic and tribal minorities within states, where necessary, to fulfil their aspirations of development of their linguistic-cultural identity and economic progress, the Centre will fail to counter the growing separatist and divisive threats to the country" (*Election Manifesto of CPM, 1991* 1991: 6). Therefore, the CPM was able to recognise that the demands for a separate state were arising not only due to poor development initiatives but also due to a desire on the part of socio-cultural identities to assert themselves. The exploitation of regions or social groups was likely to result in political demand-making for separate administrative units.

The CPM manifesto also pointed out the worsening conditions of the weaker sections of the population, exploitative working conditions, and poor growth of educational and employment opportunities. It desired urgent and effective policy measures to ameliorate the situation to contain political and social strife and ensure peace and progress. In this way, it was also addressing the situation of the worsening development profile in the Jharkhand region, as observed in chapters 4 and 5.

Due to the political configuration in which the CPM found itself, instead of promises, it put forth a set of demands to be placed before the next government. It desired the electorate to vote for its candidates so that those demands could be pursued effectively in Parliament. Concerning the tribal regions, it demanded that steps must be taken to ensure "protection of the land, culture and language of tribal people. Autonomy for compact, contiguous, tribal majority areas within states where necessary"

(*Election Manifesto of CPM, 1991* 1991: 17). This emphasis of the CPM on autonomous administrative structures for tribal pockets was quite different from the Jharkhandi demand for a separate state, and the scope of creating such areas of tribal autonomy was remote. Besides, the resultant arrangement would be undesirable as well as impractical, as there were hardly any exclusively tribal regions left, and it was improbable that the creation of tribal autonomy in small compact tribal pockets was a plausible course of action. Moreover, the desirability of separating the tribals from the rest of the population of the region and allowing them to become 'national tribal parks', is questionable. However, the views of the CPM have some merit since it recognised the need to seek solutions to the Jharkhandi problem at a political level.

Stance in 1996

The 1996 manifesto of the CPM continued with the analyses and demands made in its 1991 manifesto. It did not support the JMM's demand for a separate state. The party continued its demand for "prevention of atrocities against tribals; protection of land, culture and language of tribal people; granting of autonomy for compact contiguous tribal majority areas within the framework of existing states" (*Election Manifesto of CPM, 1996* 1996: 14).

Before ending the analysis of the CPM's political stance, it must be noted that the CPM has been quite vocal in its demand for greater state autonomy vis-a-vis the Central government. It has also been demanding greater autonomy for the tribal areas. However in West Bengal, the CPM despite being in office for over twenty years, has not extended any substantial measure of autonomy to the Gorkha areas which could have been a beacon for other regions demanding autonomy. In fact, there were no references to the Gorkhaland issue in their 1996 manifesto. This indicates that the CPM also has only been paying lip service to the cause of autonomy like most other political parties.

National Front/Janata Dal

The nineties have seen the rise and fall of the Janata Dal and National Front (of which an important constituent was the

Janata Dal). The National Front has had two stints in office at the Centre, and the Janata Dal was in office in Bihar.[19] Consequently, the views expressed by this party are of some consequence.

The 1989 election manifesto

The 1989 election manifesto of the National Front presented a new dimension to the problems in the tribal areas of the country. It listed this issue under the section on "Regional Aspirations" and was of the view that "regional aspirations of the submerged groups residing in such underdeveloped areas as the eastern tribal belt call for fulfilment by appropriate measures" (*Election Manifesto of NF, 1989* n.d.: 13).

It is significant that the National Front was the first political party in India with, perhaps, the qualified exception of the JMM, to publicly recognise that the issue of Jharkhand was no longer a tribal issue and had over the years acquired a regional character. The JMM and other Jharkhandi groups had some degree of responsibility for this change in the character of the movement, which no longer perceived itself as a movement for a tribal state. By the late 1980s, many of the people of Jharkhand, irrespective of their origin, were in favour of a Jharkhand state. The demand for a separate state had truly become a regional aspiration.

However, despite its recognition of the regional character of the Jharkhand movement, the National Front sought to ensure that the tribal population of the region was not crushed under the majoritarianism of the non-tribal populace. It said:

> the tribals' interests will be fully protected and various hardships and evictions, which they face owing to ill-conceived forest laws and arbitrary actions of forest officials, will be removed. Their customary laws will be respected and observed ... their special needs will be attended to in the formulations and execution of forest policies and they will be made active participants in the process of massive afforestation. (*Election Manifesto of NF, 1989* n.d.: 26)

This recognition by the National Front that even after the creation of a state of Jharkhand, the tribals and other backward social groups would require active policy support indicates that its leaders had a good grasp of the realities in Bihar. However,

the overemphasis on forest rights vis-à-vis the tribal population underplayed the fact that the tribal population of Bihar was no longer dependent on forest produce alone and required active public policy intervention in their lives, at the same level as any other poor and weak social group.

Manifesto for the 1991 general election

With the Janata Dal government in office in Bihar, the election manifesto of National Front for the 1991 election had softened its stance with regard to the Jharkhand issue. Whereas in the 1989 manifesto, the National Front had promised "appropriate measures" to deal with the regional aspiration of the people in the "eastern tribal belt", by the 1991 election, the 'appropriate measures' had boiled down to the JAAC. The 1991 manifesto mentioned Jharkhand by name and said that

> राष्ट्रीय मोर्चा झारखण्ड के लोगो की आकांक्षाओं के प्रति सहानुभूति रखता है। हमारे आदिवासी भाईयों के लम्बे शोषण ने उन्हे अब तक बेहद गरीबी की स्थिति में रखा है। उनकी तकलीफो और यातनाओं को संवेदन शून्य व अति केन्द्रीकृत प्रशासन ने और अधिक बढ़ाया है।
>
> उनकी उचित आकांक्षाओ का आदर करते हुए बिहार में जनता दल सरकार ने हाल ही में वहीं के विकास व अन्य गतिविधियों को संभालने व तुरंत राहत देने के उद्देश्य से एक विकास-परिषद की स्थापना की है। राष्ट्रीय मोर्चा एक अलग राज्य की मांग पर सर्वसहमति बनाने का प्रयास करेगा। (*Election Manifesto of NF, 1991* n.d.: 14)
>
> [The National Front sympathises with the aspirations of the people of Jharkhand. Long drawn exploitation has kept our tribal brethren in extreme poverty. Their problems and pain have been aggravated by an insensitive and overcentralised administration.
>
> With a view to respecting their legitimate aspirations, maintaining developmental and other activities, and for immediate relief, the Janata Dal government in Bihar has recently established a development council. The National Front will attempt to build a consensus on the demand for a separate state.]

This manifesto needs to be viewed in the light of the fact that the then Janata Dal Chief Minister of Bihar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, had declared that he would allow the creation of a separate state

in Jharkhand only over his dead body. Additionally, despite the bill creating the JAAC having been passed in 1994, election to the JAAC was never held and the powers allocated to it were not transferred. In such a situation, the promise of meeting the aspirations for autonomy in the region made by the National Front in 1989, with the Janata Dal as one of its main constituents, amounted to little more than political rhetoric.

However, the other promises made by the National Front in the manifesto vis-à-vis the ST population did not have many new or original strands. They followed the well-known promise of more investment in the development of the Scheduled Tribes. The analyses in the last three chapters indicate that despite a continuous increase in the money allocated, there has not been a proportionate increase in the rate of improvement of the development profile of either the Jharkhand region as a whole or the ST population of Jharkhand.

It is also noteworthy that the National Front did not see the issue of Jharkhand as an identity-based movement. It was politically astute to recognise that the movement had acquired a regionalist character, but it continued to view the movement as a product of development imbalances. The reason provided for the creation of the JAAC definitely leads to this interpretation (the JAAC Act will be discussed later in the chapter).

The National Front did not last till the next election in 1996. The constituent parties fought the election as different parties. It is another matter that after the election, thirteen of them joined together to form an unstable coalition government (which was in office during 1996–97) with the outside support of the INC to give it the necessary majority in Parliament.

Janata Dal manifesto of 1996

The Janata Dal manifesto of 1996 did not refer to the issue of Jharkhand at all, although it dwelt on the question of smaller states, probably to counter the BJP's promise of smaller states. On this issue, it simply promised to set up another commission to enquire into the matter:

> Demands have been raised for several decades for the creation of smaller States in view of economic backwardness of certain regions

> within the respective States, aspirations for regional identity and large size of certain States, which causes difficulties to the people in dealing with State level administration. Janata Dal will appoint a Commission to go into these demands and make appropriate recommendations. (*Election Manifesto of JD, 1996* n.d.: 21)

The Janata Dal was of the opinion that new states must be created to improve administrative convenience. The fact that cultural identities may aspire for a separate state seemed incidental to the Janata Dal. Further, the tone of the manifesto indicates that as far as the Janata Dal was concerned, the issue of Jharkhand had been settled for good with the creation of the JAAC. With relation to the ST population of the country, it repeated many of its development promises from the 1991 manifesto.

Cross-party support for 'development-deficit' argument

There is one factor that is common to all the parties discussed. All of them clubbed the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes. The fact that regional/tribal-cultural identity may have a significant input into political demand-making, which is presently being witnessed in India, does not seem to have been central to any political manifesto. Further, the above delineation of the election manifestos of the various political parties seems to indicate that all the parties believed that the only justification for the creation of a new state was the prospect of better administrative convenience to improve public policy delivery. In this sense, most political parties still seem to believe that narrower ascriptive identities will be subsumed into the national identity under the impetus of a faster and efficient development. The viewpoint of the political actors hardly seems to have evolved since the time of Independence.

With regard to the Jharkhand region, all the political parties (including the JMM) laid a lot of emphasis on its poor development profile. The fact that the Jharkhandi identity had become politically significant was secondary for all of them. As far as the single-purpose party—JMM— was concerned, it did not want to overemphasise the identity aspect since the political system had been unable to evolve mechanisms to deal with such demands. Too much emphasis on the distinct identity of the Jharkhand

region could lead to State repression. Also, the 'development-deficit' argument was 'secular' and non-controversial enough to draw cross-party support. While the various political points of view could differ over the remedy for underdevelopment—from an autonomous council to a state to the panchayati raj system—no one could disagree that urgent action was required to devolve power to the local communities so that development could be accelerated. It is curious that other similar demands in the country which had adopted violence and separatism (for instance, Assam and Punjab) drew a lot of condemnation but also political attention, whereas demands such as that of a separate state of Jharkhand could only secure marginal reference and consideration, if any. It seems that the political system had lost all its will and capability to attempt resolution of socio-political conflict without resort to violence. In this sense, the system had neglected a fundamental aspect of its responsibility.

This unwillingness and inability on the part of the political system to provide enough political space for political differences, with a view to resolving them before such political demand-making groups take up arms, also speaks of the instability of the State, and leads to what some commentators have called the 'crisis of governability' (Kohli 1990).

The Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council Act, 1994

The incessant struggle on the part of the Jharkhandi political parties and social groups and the accompanying economic blockades of minerals in the south Bihar region in the 1980s and 1990s succeeded in bringing the necessity of new politico-administrative arrangements for the Jharkhand region onto the national agenda. There were considerable differences of opinion across the political spectrum about the shape of the proposed politico-administrative body. The options ranged from a new state, as demanded by the JMM, to a mere revamping of the public-policy delivery mechanism as suggested by the INC. Amongst the national political parties, the question of a new state found favour only with the BJP, whereas other political parties suggested merely a development council. Nonetheless, despite the differences in opinion about the structure, all political parties concurred with the view

that the Jharkhand movement was premised on the poor performance of development policy in the region of south Bihar. If the movement was at all seen as one premised on an identity, it was a regional identity united by poverty and underdevelopment. The possibility of the existence of a tribal identity in the region had become of least importance.

Accordingly, the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council Act 1994 was passed on the presupposition of a regional, development-based demand. The very first sentence of the Act reinforced this point of view:

> An Act To establish An Autonomous Council for all round accelerated development of the Jharkhand Area. Be it enacted by the Legislature of Bihar. (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995)

The then Janata Dal government of Bihar, in accordance with the position proclaimed in its manifesto, viewed the whole issue of Jharkhand as one born out of development imbalances that could be ameliorated by devolution of administrative powers. The Act sought to do precisely that.

The Act created the council as a legal entity with not more than 162 directly elected and eighteen nominated members (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 3 (1)). As far as the structure of the council was concerned, it followed the pattern of the state legislative assemblies all over the country, with seats reserved for both Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Curiously, unlike most development-council models in the country, the local MPs, MLAs, or heads of other development bodies, such as panchayat heads, had no ex-officio rights to sit in the council. As regards the eighteen nominated seats,

1. the Speaker of the Bihar Vidhan Sabha has the power to appoint not more than 8 MLAs from the region to the JAAC;
2. the state government could also appoint two MPs from the region to the Council;
3. the state government is empowered to appoint not more than eight persons with experience of public works, urban works, rural development or social welfare who live in the area to the JAAC. (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 13 (1))

This provision seriously undermined the autonomy of the council. If the state government thought that the JAAC was function-

ing too independently for its liking, it could utilise these provisions to interfere with the business of the council. Moreover, the scope of such independent action on the part of the council was remote. The state governor had discretionary powers to dissolve the council and take over all its functions through an officer not below the rank of an additional secretary in the Government of India who could be appointed for the purpose (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 12). In this sense, the council was no more than a development body with some degree of elected representation. Its continued existence depended on the discretion of the governor[20] and, therefore, was susceptible to pressures from the state government. In terms of autonomy for the region, this model was not of much consequence. The JAAC turned out to be nothing more than a glorified municipal government.

The only recognition to the tribal character of the region in the Act was that the chairman elected to preside over the meetings of the JAAC had to be a tribal (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 15). As far as all other provisions were concerned, the JAAC was like a development body in any other part of the country (such as panchayati raj institutions) with a regional scope. Apart from a couple of entries concerning tribal welfare and development, in the subjects to be transferred to the JAAC, there was no recognition of the unique culture and tradition of the region that the JMM was so fond of pointing out.

The essentially development character of the council's activities and the overall control of the state government over it was highlighted by the powers and functions assigned to the JAAC:

> Subject to the general guidelines of the State Government, the Council shall have the following powers and functions on the subjects specified in Schedule 3:-
>
> (a) to fix priority and prepare plans for development programmes;
> (b) to formulate projects;
> (c) to sanction projects;
> (d) to get projects executed;
> (e) to sanction Central Plans relating [to] the Area and to get it executed;
> (f) to review, supervise, co-ordinate and monitor the projects. (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 29 (3))

The above provisions make it amply clear that the council was conceived as nothing more than a plan-implementation body. It

followed the general assumption that major political problems could be solved by greater and more intensive policy investment with some degree of local representation. Due to the fact that the state government could exercise tight control over all the activities of the council, the regional aspirations of the Jharkhandi leaders and population (as promised by the Janata Dal manifesto) were realised only as far as minor adjustments to the general development policy of the Bihar government. At best, the JAAC could act as a local public policy implementation department and at worst become a powerless political window dressing.

The Act certainly did not grant the council any greater degree of autonomy even with regard to development programmes in the region. In fact, the state government's control was clearly spelt out in sections 42 and 44. Section 42 required that "the Council in the discharge of its functions, shall be guided by such direction on policy matters as may be given to it from time to time by the State Government" (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 42). Section 44, instead of designating Patna High Court as the arbitrator in matters of dispute, provided that "if in the interpretation of the provision of the Act, there is a difference of opinion between the State Government and the Council, it shall be settled by the Governor" (: 44). There thus seemed to be no actual devolution of power.

With regard to the executive power of the JAAC, the office of the council was to be headed by a chief executive officer appointed by the governor of Bihar after consulting the chief executive councillor (chairman of the council and ex-officio head of the executive council). All staff recruited for the JAAC were subject to budgetary and other controls of the state government. The council was empowered to discipline only class-three and class-four staff. All disciplinary powers with respect to other staff rested with the state government. Further, all administrative postings of the staff were subject to guidelines issued by the Bihar government (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 32). Thus, the executive power of the JAAC was also under the control of the state government.

As far as financial powers were concerned, the council was promised "a minimum of 25 percent of the State's Annual Plan" (*JAAC Act, 1994* 1995: 34 (7)). However, as a member of the

central committee of JMM complained in May 1996, the actual transfer of powers and resources to the JAAC was still awaited. Even the election to the JAAC was never held, and throughout its existence, the JAAC consisted of appointees of the state government. Besides, with almost total control by the state government over its activities, there was very little scope for the JAAC to actually reallocate this money to projects which it deemed to be of greater importance in the region. Furthermore, the example of numerous centrally-sponsored schemes (CSS), undermining the development autonomy of the states, indicates that the Bihar government had ample scope of undermining the limited development autonomy granted to the region in the form of the JAAC.

The powers devolved to the JAAC were not much more than those which had been devolved to the panchayats under the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992. A comparison of the subjects devolved has been made in the annex at the end of the chapter. If the comparison is pursued, it becomes clear that almost all the powers that the Bihar government intended to devolve to the JAAC in 1994 had already been devolved to the panchayats by Parliament in 1992. It would not be untrue to hold that the Bihar government devolved those powers which it no longer possessed after the Seventy-third Amendment to the Constitution. The only exceptions were subjects that were peculiar to the region, such as bee keeping, sericulture, minor minerals, tribal sub-plan and welfare, and tribal welfare.

Some other subjects were not in the Eleventh Schedule but were present in the JAAC Act, such as regional planning and implementation, urban development, and municipal corporations. Such subjects could not have been included in the panchayat structure created by the Seventy-third Amendment since it was meant to deal mainly with rural village conditions, whereas the JAAC Act dealt with a region which had a larger geographical scope. The subjects that were included in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution of India by the Seventy-third Amendment but not in the JAAC Act were fuel and fodder, non-conventional energy, adult and continuing education, and public distribution system. It could also be argued that these powers conferred greater initiative on the panchayats compared with the JAAC.

The powers delegated to the JAAC under regional planning and implementation were a major item in principle, but in practice, all planning of development programmes was centralised in the Planning Commission with even the states having very limited powers over this area. The initiative of indicative planning by the Planning Commission under the Eighth and Ninth Five Year Plans could have led to a substantial role for the JAAC, but was not operationalised. Moreover, even if the indicative planning initiative had led to actual decentralisation of development planning, the JAAC could not have been a greater beneficiary than the panchayati institutions, which in effect means that the JAAC would have been no better than any other line agency.

Thus, it would not be an exaggeration to state that the JAAC was a panchayat with a much larger geographic scope and, consequently, greater financial and development allocations. Such an administrative structure could not have fulfilled the legitimate regional aspirations of the people of Jharkhand. The people of the region wanted a separate state, but what they got was, in fact, a glorified panchayat. The Jharkhandi leaders and population had expected some degree of regional autonomy under the JAAC. However, all they were granted was a regional municipal council.

Identity and Autonomy

It may also be questioned whether the tribal cultural identity survives in Jharkhand anymore. The experience in the interviews with the ordinary men and women of Jharkhand indicated that they may not have been too concerned about the Jharkhandi identity premised on a shared history and culture, but all of them would have liked to see their development affairs administered from Ranchi and not from Patna. Even the local INC activists and leaders in the region admitted (it must be borne in mind that the INC had not supported the creation of a Jharkhand state) that Jharkhandi governance must rest in Ranchi. A bicycle mechanic in the region emphatically put it: "सरकार तो राची मे होना ही चाहिये" [Government must definitely be at Ranchi]. It was noticed that many of the common people of the region did not understand the complicated political reorientation that had become the hallmark of Jharkhandi politics; some of them thought

that the old Jharkhand Party still existed. However, they seemed to be of the firm opinion that if the affairs of Jharkhand were administered from Ranchi, it would benefit them immensely. Not all respondents were able to provide a reason for this belief, but their responses can be summarised as follows:

1. The closer the government would be, the simpler would it be to influence and control it. If officials personally known to the general population were in control of the affairs of the government, then there was a better chance of efficient delivery of policy.
2. Geographical proximity of the government would make it easier for them to pursue matters that otherwise took months to be processed.
3. The unique identity of the region was not emphasised except by those who were very politically active. However, the unequivocal response to the question if they wanted the government to be based at Ranchi, indicates that the ordinary Jharkhandis recognised Jharkhand as a region separate from the rest of Bihar. They were also acutely aware of their distance—both physical and psychological—from the existing government at Patna (and New Delhi). The populace no doubt had a feeling of alienation and regarded the government and its policy machinery as remote and inaccessible.

The political leaders of the regions supported some degree of political autonomy irrespective of their party affiliations. Some of them seemed to think that it would be better to have a union territory, others supported a separate state while yet others sought greater autonomy within Bihar. Marxist leaders pointed to the fundamental flaws in the whole structure of economic relations whereas the JMM leaders sought to secure a state by demonstrating the scope of development with the help of the JAAC. The fact remained that no one seemed to be satisfied with the arrangements. In fact, dissatisfaction over the way in which the whole question of the JAAC had been treated by the Bihar government had already set in. The JMM leaders pointed out in 1996 that election to the council had not been held despite more than a year having passed. In the meantime, the involvement of some of the JMM MPs, including Soren, in a corruption scandal had

harmed their position and the JMM gradually lost electoral and popular support to the BJP which had been promising a separate state.

The political dynamics of Bihar and the Jharkhand region changed very rapidly since 1997. After the author's field trip in 1996, some crucial developments took place. The chief minister, Laloo Prasad Yadav, who was so adamant against the creation of a state in Jharkhand was charged with corruption and arrested. During the events leading to his arrest, the Janata Dal split and he formed a new party called the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). For this new RJD government to survive, the support of the Jharkhandi MLAs was crucial. Consequently, the JMM MLAs supported the new government and in return secured the passing of a resolution in the Vidhan Sabha which recommended to the Union government that a separate state must be created in Jharkhand. This resolution was passed on 23 July 1997.[21]

The 1999 election resulted in the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coming to power at the Centre. As a result of the strategic use of political resources controlled by the electorate, JMM did not win a single seat in the Jharkhand area while BJP won 11 of the 14 seats (with one going to the RJD and two to the INC). Owing to the record of strategic voting by the Jharkhand electorate in the past, the NDA fulfilled its electoral promise of creating a state in Jharkhand. Consequently, the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 2 August 2000, and after passage in the Rajya Sabha and receiving presidential assent, the new state of Jharkhand was inaugurated on 15 November 2000.

The creation of the Jharkhand state may have satisfied the aspiration of the Jharkhandi identity, but the degree to which this will improve the performance of development policy in this new state remains to be seen. Political realignment in Jharkhand in view of the new political reality can be seen, with the JMM, RJD, BJP and INC as the major actors. Besides, the development model and the bureaucratic model of delivery of public policy have not changed. The degree to which the ongoing political realignment will affect development policy is a question that will be answered in the future. Given the previous track record of the area that is now the state of Jharkhand and the experience of

other states of the Indian Union, perhaps, the politics of development will continue. Such politics of development will be marked by strategic use of resources by the electorate in order to secure a better performance of the development policy in the state. Given the past success of the electorate in strategic use of the resources vested in them, there is no reason why similar avenues cannot be utilised by them to make the government of the new state of Jharkhand more responsive and accountable, to secure an efficient public policy performance and good governance.

Notes

1. Here the term jati has been used to mean tribes.
2. Although there has never been a revision of the criteria for the creation of a state, instances do exist where states have been created on the basis of regional and cultural identities such as Nagaland in 1963, Mizoram in 1986, and recently Jharkhand in 2000.
3. This was so because of the multiplicity of languages spoken in tribal south Bihar. Moreover, these languages have only now begun to acquire some written form. Consequently, some people do not consider them as languages but dialects.
4. In this case, the definition of the nature and character of the movement.
5. The important political figures of the Jharkhand movement who were members of the COJM were Dr R. D. Munda, Dr A. K. Singh, N. E. Horo, Shibu Soren, B. B. Mahto, B. P. Kesri, S. S. Besra, Prabhakar Tirkey, Santosh Rana, Suraj Mandal, Shailendra Mahato and Prof. Stephen Marandi.
6. The original demand of a Jharkhand consisted of 25 districts from tribal regions of four states—Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Orissa. However, the BJP proposed that a state called Vananchal be created comprising the tribal districts of south Bihar only.
7. Supplementary note to Report, Committee on Jharkhand Matters 1990.
8. Question number 304, *Parliamentary Debates: Lok Sabha*, 9 July 1992.
9. Question number 87, *Parliamentary Debates: Rajya Sabha*, 30 November 1992.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Debate on the Resolution regarding creation of new states of Uttaranchal and Vananchal, *Parliamentary Debates: Lok Sabha*, 5 March 1993, col. 418–27.

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., col. 437–43.
15. Continuation of debate on the Resolution regarding creation of new States of Uttaranchal and Vananchal, *Parliamentary Debates: Lok Sabha*, 19 March 1993, col. 380–6.
16. Election manifestos for elections other than the Vidhan Sabha election of 1995 and the Lok Sabha election of 1996 were not available even at the central office of the JMM.
17. The JMM, in principle, still lays claim to a 'Greater Jharkhand'. However, now that the state has been created by dividing Bihar, there is little possibility of such a demand being taken seriously. Moreover, as early as 1996, their leaders doubted the political practicability of such a proposal.
18. Interview with R. T. Singh, BJP MP for Ranchi, May 1996.
19. Presently, the Rashtriya Janata Dal is in office in Bihar, which was formed after a split in the Janata Dal in 1997.
20. In this context, the discretion of the governor effectively meant that of the chief minister and the government of Bihar, as the JAAC was the creation of the Bihar Vidhan Sabha and, therefore, the governor would normally have acted in accordance with the advice of the chief minister.
21. *The Times of India*, 24 July 1997, Internet edition at http://www.timesofindia.com.

Annex

Subjects devolved to the JAAC under the JAAC Act 1994 and its corresponding entry in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution

JAAC Act	*Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution*
Entry number on the list and subject	*Entry number on the list and subject*
1. Public health	23. Health and sanitation including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries
2. Hospital, dispensary and nurses training	Partly included in number 23.
3. Tourism	Partly included in number 29

Annex continued

Annex continued

JAAC Act	Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution
Entry number on the list and subject	*Entry number on the list and subject*
4. Vocational education	18. Technical training and vocational education
5. Agriculture	1. Agriculture including agricultural extension
6. Construction and maintenance of rural roads	13. Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, water ways and other means of communication
7. Cremation and burial grounds	Partly included in number 29
8. *Hat*, market and fairs	22. Market and fairs
9. Minor irrigation	3. Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development
10. Public health, engineering and sanitation	Corresponds to section 23
	11. Drinking water
11. Dairy development	4. Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry
12. Fisheries	5. Fisheries
13. Bee-keeping	– –
14. Sericulture	
15. Primary and secondary (up to plus two) education	17. Education including primary and secondary schools
16. Management of land and building under the ownership of the council	
17. Rural development	14. Rural electrification including distribution of electricity
	10. Rural housing
	16. Poverty alleviation programme
18. Small and cottage industries	8. Small scale industries including food processing industries
	9. Khadi, village and cottage industries
19. Minor minerals	– –
20. All programmes of welfare department	24. Family welfare
	25. Women and child development

Annex continued

Annex continued

JAAC Act	Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution
Entry number on the list and subject	*Entry number on the list and subject*
	26. Social welfare including welfare of the handicapped and the mentally retarded
	27. Welfare of the weaker section and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes
21. All programmes relating to urban development	– –
22. Repairs, renovation and maintenance of medium and minor irrigation projects	Included in number 3.
23. Forest (excluding settlement)	6. Social forestry and farm forestry
	7. Minor forest produce
24. The use of canal water for irrigation purposes, excluding canals which pertain to medium and major projects	Included in number 3.
25. Recommendation for the settlement of available government land for agriculture, animal husbandry, government primary, high and plus two schools, government hospitals and cottage and small scale industries	Partly corresponds to number 4
26. Cattle pound	– –
27. Implementation of externally aided projects relating to specified subjects of the council and regional planning	– –
28. Tribal Sub-Plan and welfare	– –
29. Cultural affairs including theatre and drama	20. Libraries
	21. Cultural activities
30. Sports	– –
31. Youth welfare	Included in number 26

Annex continued

Annex continued

JAAC Act	*Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution*
Entry number on the list and subject	*Entry number on the list and subject*
32. Animal husbandry	Included in number 4.
33. Vital statistics	– –
34. Weights and measures	– –
35. Local transport	– –
36. Food and civil supplies	– –
37. Flood control for village protection	Included in number 3.
38. Tribal welfare	– –
39. Public works	Included in numbers 3 and 29 as well as in some others
40. Municipal corporation, improvement trust, district board and other local self-government and village administration	– –
41. Panchayats	
42. Recommendation to the state government with regard to electricity	Included partially in number 14.
	2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation
	12. Fuel and fodder
	15. Non-conventional energy sources
	19. Adult and non-formal education
	28. Public distribution system
	29. Maintenance of community assets

Source: Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council Act 1994 (1995: Schedule 3) and *The Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act 1992* (1993).

8

Conclusion

This study of the relationship between the dynamics of the implementation of development policy and the crystallisation of an ethnic identity using the Modified Resource Dependence Model has yielded significant insights into the avenues by which State action influences the formation and/or crystallisation of ethnic identities. It also points to significant maladies in the process of development planning and implementation in India.

The Jharkhandi identity draws upon cultural differences premised on a collection of selected historical facts and constructs, and is rooted in the political discourse which emerged in colonial and post-colonial India under the influence of nationalist thought. The autonomous forms of community formation by the nationalist leaders during the anti-colonial struggle had repercussions for 'subnational' ethnic communities. The latter utilised cultural premises and symbolism similar to the ones utilised by the nationalist leadership at the national level to create a politically pertinent identity. Such a process occurred in the Jharkhand region, where the educated elite created a Jharkhandi identity which was premised on the uniqueness of the tribal cultural heritage and way of life. The Jharkhandi identity was seen as distinct from all other such identities (for instance, the linguistic identities that emerged in many parts of India) and sought political recognition (as had been extended to the linguistic communities). This identity showed a remarkable ability to respond to new ground realities as witnessed in the redefinition of a diku in the context of the changing demographic profile of the region. Over time, the premise of tribal culture and heritage was construed to represent all the inhabitants of the geographical region of Jharkhand and not merely the tribal inhabitants. Thus, the identity became more inclusive than

exclusive. The Jharkhandi identity also successfully utilised other grounds for political mobilisation, notably the deteriorating development profile of the Jharkhand region, to tap into the tribal and non-tribal popular support.

The post-colonial state in India adopted a rationalist-integrationist model of administration. The new administrative structures were framed with the objective of achieving the same ideals that the nationalist leadership had learnt to cherish from the colonial discourse. Consequently, significant strands of the colonial discourse continued in the post-Independence Indian administration. However, this rationalist-integrationist premise of the post-colonial administrative structures also meant that the State was unable to respond adequately to the political demands from the newly articulated political identities premised on cultural factors. The linguistic criterion of reorganisation of states adopted by the SRC was intended to enable a more efficient implementation of the rationalist-integrationist development planning and implementation. However, in some ways the criterion of language was a compromise between rational reorganisation and the need to give political recognition to some of the many 'subnational' communities/identities which had crystallised in independent India.

In the case of Jharkhand, another factor was to intervene in the politics of identity, i.e., the issue of development imbalances in the region. The support for the Jharkhandi parties was high in the first decade of independence and there was popular support for the politics of the Jharkhandi identity. This coincided with the development profile of the Jharkhand region being marginally better than that for Bihar as a whole during this period. By the end of the 1950s, the development profile of the region became stagnant and sluggish. As the development problems became acute, popular support for the Jharkhandi political parties with a single-point agenda of the creation of a separate state began to deteriorate. Hence, it appears that in moving away from the Jharkhandi parties, the electorate gave greater importance to the issue of faster development than to political recognition of the Jharkhandi identity. The Jharkhandi leaders, however, would have argued that a separate state would not only lead to political recognition of the Jharkhandi identity but also to better long-term development prospects.

The avenues for exchange of resources offered by the Jharkhandi parties were too narrow to yield a meaningful exchange of political, economic and information resources between the State and the electorate. Even if the electorate had invested all the political resources at its command in the Jharkhandi parties, the institutional arrangements in India precluded the possibility of their being able to secure a better policy response from the State.

The declining development profile of the region in the 1950–1960 decade undermined the issue of a separate state and autonomy by the 1962 election. Hence, it is not out of place to speculate that if the state policy machinery had performed well after this period, the demand for autonomy might have been marginalised even further. However, since the politics of identity does not always operate on such rational lines, nothing can be said conclusively.

The entry of national parties onto the political stage of Jharkhand, beginning in the 1960s, coincided with a period of decline in the development profile of the region. The electorate invested a great deal of political support in the national parties, especially the INC, in the hope of securing a better public policy response to the development problems in the region. However, there were only brief periods of relatively improved performance of the policy machinery, that too with regard to certain development indicators only. Besides, during such periods as well, public policy demonstrated a better performance in Bihar as a whole than the Jharkhand region, except with regard to the tribal population under the Tribal Sub-Plan.

The TSP approach began in the mid-1970s when the issue of underdevelopment was a problem for the entire region and not just the ST population. Moreover, the Scheduled Tribes at that time were just over a quarter of the total population of Jharkhand. Hence, the new policy initiatives failed to quell the political aspirations of the Jharkhandi identity which by now had become a peculiar mixture of regional, cultural and ethnic identities. The declining development profile only provided additional grounds for political mobilisation. The hope of a more balanced exchange of resources between the electorate and the State within the avenues offered by the national parties did not show adequate results. Furthermore, the Jharkhand region gradually came

to contribute a very large proportion to the state exchequer without receiving reciprocal investment in development activities. What made the Jharkhandi electorate even more resentful was the fact that the Jharkhand region, with its vast mineral reserves, contributed substantially to the economic well-being of the entire country but was being treated like an internal colony.

Ironically, the same development imbalances which had earlier overshadowed the issues of identity and autonomy in the 1960s and 1970s, were the reason for a renewal in the popular support for a separate state in the mid-1980s. There emerged a positive correlation between the declining development profile and this new phase of demand for a separate province in the Jharkhand region. In some ways, this is reminiscent of the anti-colonial struggle. The population of Jharkhand came to see the Bihar government as an oppressive regime from which redemption was possible only with the creation of a separate state.

The State sought to underplay the threat to its legitimacy from the Jharkhandi identity by interpreting the movement as having its base in the development imbalances in the Jharkhand region. The oversensitivity of the Indian state to what it perceived as a threat to national integrity had a role to play in this. It has not been able to reconcile to the fact that regional cultural identities do not necessarily threaten the national identity and it is possible for individuals and communities to have multiple identities. The Jharkhandi identity has, however, been able to arrive at a balance between the regional-cultural ethnic identity and national identity which is expressed in the JMM's slogan: *Jai Jharkhand, Jai Bharat* [Glory to Jharkhand, Glory to India]. The two identities are thus construed as mutually complementary.

The rationalist-integrationist bureaucratic State's inability and unwillingness to respond to the political aspirations of the Jharkhandi identity resulted in its attempts to interpret the Jharkhand movement in purely developmental terms. The question of development is, no doubt, closely linked to the Jharkhandi identity because popular support for the demand for autonomy had re-emerged due to the failure of the public policy mechanism to fulfil its part of the exchange of resources. Further, the Jharkhandi political opinion was quick to point out that the failure of the development policy in the existing political and administrative

arrangements provided even more grounds for the creation of a separate province. The exchange of information resources, which followed, between the State and the Jharkhandi political opinion led to the 'development-deficit' definition of the character of the Jharkhand movement being adopted by the Jharkhandi political formations as well. This provided them with an additional basis for the mobilisation of the non-tribal component of the population of the region. Further, the acceptance on the part of the State that all was not well in the Jharkhand region also bestowed the long-eluding political legitimacy on the movement. The deteriorating development profile of Jharkhand, changing demographic balance in the region, and the legislative impotence of the Jharkhandi political groups led the Jharkhandi identity to become inextricably linked to the development profile of the region.

The population of Jharkhand had experimented in vain with political parties of all hues and colours in the hope of securing a balanced exchange of resources. However, the political machinery had let them down once too often. Consequently, since mid-1980s, they have not been too enthusiastic in extending all their electoral support to the Jharkhandi parties. The electorate of Jharkhand, therefore, adopted a three-pronged approach as part of a strategic exchange of resources. It continued to extend political patronage to national parties in the election for parliamentary seats, as only Parliament has the powers to create a new state. Some of this patronage was also extended to the Jharkhandi parties to represent the Jharkhandi opinion in Parliament. At the state level, sizeable support was extended to the party that was likely to enter office at Patna, in the hope of securing a better public policy response, pending the creation of a territorial state in the Jharkhand region.

However, the third strand of the political resources at the command of the electorate was invested in the agitational politics of the JCC, the JMM and the AJSU. The demonstrations and agitations drew the support of a large number of the Jharkhandi populace. This was witnessed in the economic blockades of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The disruption in the transportation of vital minerals from the region was often met by coercive actions of the State, which in turn, undermined the legitimacy of the

regime. Consequently, the State was forced to seek out a mutually acceptable public policy response to the situation. Thus, a more meaningful exchange of resources emerged. This three-pronged strategic investment of political resources by the population of the Jharkhand region yielded better results. The creation of the JAAC in 1994 recognised the importance of political recognition to the Jharkhandi identity.

However, the creation of a regional development council was not the end of either the development problems or the politics of identity in the region. The Jharkhand issue continued to fester due to two broad reasons. Firstly, the creation of the JAAC was not an adequate devolution of powers to the local level. Hence, it could neither ensure an improved delivery by the public policy machinery nor satisfy the regionalist aspirations of the Jharkhandi population. Secondly, the fundamental imbalances in the existing bureaucratic delivery mechanism have been the absence of infrastructure to utilise the financial allocations and the lack of avenues for significant local inputs into the process of development planning.

The arrangements under JAAC did not significantly alter this state of affairs and the issues of development and identity continued to fester. The strategic three-pronged sharing of resources by the electorate in the region was utilised by a relatively new political actor in Jharkhand—the BJP. Correctly gauging the electorate's disposition, the BJP started promising a separate state of Jharkhand in the early 1990s (at that time, it was the only national party that supported the demand for a separate state). This gradually started having remarkable impact on its electoral performance in the region, and the BJP slowly but steadily started replacing the Jharkhandi parties in the elections. The promise of the BJP was buttressed by the fact that its members had tabled a bill in Parliament as early as 1993 for the creation of the states of Jharkhand and Uttranchal. Consequently, when the electorate extended overwhelming support to the party in the 1999 election (BJP won 11 of the 14 seats in the region), the writing on the wall was clear. If BJP desired to have any political future in the Jharkhand region, the creation of the state of Jharkhand was important. Besides, as has been discussed in chapter 7, although the national leadership of INC was silent on the issue, the local

leaders, in their campaigns, were talking of a separate state as early as 1994–95.

Clearly, the issue of a separate state was crucial in the electorate politics of the region for all political parties, especially the BJP. Hence, the BJP-led NDA coalition government (of which JMM was then a part) tabled the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000 in Parliament, which provided for the division of the erstwhile state of Bihar into the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 2 August 2000. After passage in the Rajya Sabha and the presidential assent, the new state was inaugurated on 15 November 2000.

The creation of the new state of Jharkhand has granted adequate autonomous recognition to the Jharkhandi identity. However, the problem of development-deficit still needs to be adequately addressed. This entails a large-scale reorientation of delivery mechanisms—a task that will require all the ingenuity and resourcefulness that the Jharkhandi leadership can command. The centrality of popular participation in this reorientation of the development effort is recognised by the Jharkhandi leadership, which is reflected in the following statement by Shibu Soren:

> झारखण्ड राज्य का निर्माण कर इस क्षेत्र की जनता के हाथों मे शासन सत्ता दिया जाए ताकि यहाँ की जनता अपना विकास खुद कर सके। (Soren 1992: 19)
>
> [The power of governance of this region must be transferred into the hands of the population of this region by creating the Jharkhand state so that the population of this region can bring about its own development.]

The twenty-eighth state of the Indian Union—Jharkhand—is now a functioning reality and the question of political recognition of the Jharkhandi ethnic identity has been resolved. Whether this new political and administrative arrangement will significantly alter the development profile of the new state is a question that will be answered in the coming years.

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Interviews

The interviews conducted during the 1995–96 fieldwork were important in shaping the understanding of the political and development dynamics of the region. More than 25 hours of these interviews with the following categories of individuals were recorded on tape.
Interviews with government officials: the regional development commissioner, Ranchi; joint secretary (in-charge of Bihar), Government of India, New Delhi; director, planning department, government of Bihar; and members of the local development bureaucracy including sarpanchs, block development officers and secretary to the JAAC.
Interviews with the political actors in the Jharkhand region: the member of Parliament for Ranchi; candidates of political parties for the 1996 election; political activists of BJP, INC, JD, JMM and other political parties;

politically aware individuals such as schoolteachers and retired government officials; and local political opinion.
Interviews with the general population of the region across the urban areas and the rural interior. Particular emphasis was laid on interviewing women, youths and those belonging to the Scheduled Tribes (Christians as well as non-Christians).

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